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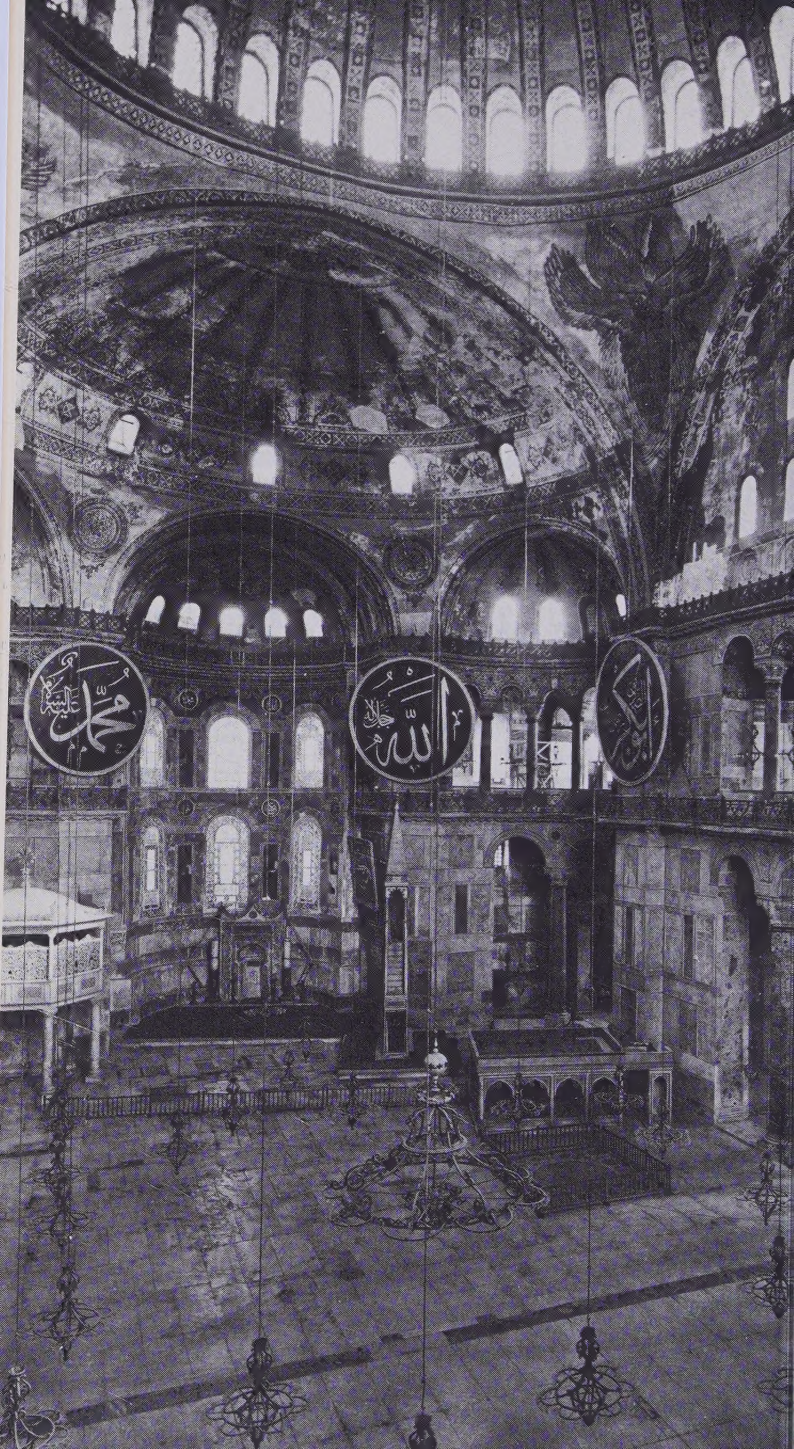
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Byzantium: The Last Phase

Steven Runciman

In the ding-dong struggle between East and West that has dominated most of recorded history the protagonists have varied in nature and in geographical position. The battle may be between Egypt and Babylon, between Rome and Parthia, between Christianity and Islam, or between Washington and the Kremlin. But it has one constant and tragic element, that of the peoples who are caught between the two fires, for instance, Israel in Old Testament times, Armenia in Roman times, or—dare we say it?—Western Europe today. In the high Middle Ages this unenviable role was occupied by Byzantium.

Till the eleventh century Byzantium itself had been one of the protagonists, the champion of Christendom against the attack of Islam. The Byzantines had done their duty with vigor and some success. But then a new challenge came from the East with the Seljuk Turks, while Western Europe had so far developed as to attempt some aggression of its own, in the persons of the Normans. This war on two fronts occurred at a moment when Byzantium was going

The nave of Saint Sophia at the present day. (*The Byzantine Institute.*)

through constitutional and dynastic difficulties. The Normans were driven back; but the Byzantines lost to the Turks, forever, the lands which had produced most of their soldiers and their food, the upland plains of Anatolia. In the Crusading epoch which followed, Byzantium found itself between the two fires. As Christians the Byzantines sympathized with the Crusaders; but a long political experience made them more tolerant of the infidel and advocates of what we now call co-existence. The Crusaders' aggressiveness seemed to them dangerous and unrealistic. In the meantime they hoped to take what advantage they could of the situation.

Nevertheless, the position of a man in the middle is uncomfortable and unsafe, unless he is powerful. Byzantium continued to play the role of a great power when in fact it had lost two of its strongest assets, its military organization and its financial security. The loss of the Anatolian recruiting grounds in a period of constant war meant that the Emperor was dependent on foreign mercenaries and foreign allies; and both demanded payment, in money and in trade concessions. Throughout the twelfth century Constantinople seemed so rich and splendid a city and the Imperial Court so magnificent that the Empire was still treated as a great power. But it was given no thanks by the Moslems for preaching co-existence, and it aroused hostility from the West for being lukewarm in the Holy War; and all the time religious differences worsened relations between Eastern and Western Christendom.

The crisis came when a Crusading army, lured by the ambition of its leaders, the greed of its Venetian allies, and the resentment that every Westerner now felt against the Byzantine Church, turned on Constantinople and succeeded in capturing it and setting up a Latin Empire. The Fourth Crusade of 1204 put an end to the old East Roman Empire, that great supernational state whose history stretched back to Constantine the Great. Its whole organization was disrupted and many of its provinces lost

forever. But Byzantium survived. After half a century in exile at Nicaea, in Western Asia Minor, the Emperor re-entered Constantinople in 1261. But the Empire restored by Michael Palaeologus was no longer the dominant power in the Christian East. It retained a certain mystical prestige. Constantinople was still New Rome and the Emperor, in Eastern eyes at least, still the Roman Emperor. But in fact he was only one prince among others equally or more powerful. There were other Greek rulers. In the East was the Empire of Trebizond, the Empire of the Grand Comnenus, rich in its silver mines and in the trade that came by the age-old route from Tabriz and the further East. In Epirus there was the Despotate of the Angeli princes, who at one time had seemed likely to beat the Nicaean Emperors in the race to recapture the capital. In the Balkans were Bulgaria and Serbia, each in turn to dominate the East Christian world. There were Frankish states and Venetian colonies all over the Greek mainland and islands. To oust the Venetians from Constantinople Byzantium had had to call in the Genoese and pay them with trade concessions; and now the Genoese colony of Galata, just across the Golden Horn, had stolen most of the commerce of the capital. In Italy there were powers and interests eager to avenge the fall of the Latin Empire. That Byzantium survived at all was largely because for a time there had been no urgent danger from the Moslem East. The Turks had been dormant; but they were soon to revive, under the leadership of a dynasty of brilliant tribal chieftains, Osman and his Ottoman successors. The restored Byzantine Empire, with complicated commitments in Europe and a constant threat from the West, needed more men and money than it possessed. It economized on the Eastern frontier till too late; and the Ottoman Turks were established within the Empire.

The recovery of Constantinople had seemed to promise a new era of greatness; but it was not long before disillusion set in. The fourteenth century was for Byzantium a period

of endless political disasters. The great kingdom of Serbia for a while threatened its existence. The provinces were devastated by the revolt of a mercenary band, the Catalan Company. There followed a series of civil wars, begun by dynastic quarrels and personal ambitions and embittered when social and religious parties became involved. One Emperor, John V Palaeologus, in his reign of fifty years, from 1341 to 1391, was dethroned three times—by his father-in-law, by his son, and by his grandson. There were ruinous visitations of the plague, notably the Black Death in 1345. The West, it is true, had its own troubles and no longer dreamed of restoring the Latin Empire. But there was now a far worse danger. The Turks took advantage of the civil wars in Byzantium and troubles in the Balkans to penetrate farther and farther into Europe. By the time that John V died, in 1391, the Turkish Sultan's armies had reached the Danube; and Byzantium was entirely encircled by his dominions.

We come now to the last phase. When John V's son Manuel II succeeded to the throne, his Empire consisted solely of Constantinople and its suburbs, Thessalonica and its suburbs, a few Thracian towns on the Black Sea and Marmora coasts, a few small islands, and the Peloponnese, where alone the Byzantines had had some success, winning back territory from the Franks. A few Latin states survived precariously in Greece. Elsewhere the Turks were pressing down on the old Empire. Clearly they would soon absorb it all, unless help arrived. But from where could help come? Eastern Christendom was now almost entirely under the Sultan. Of the still free peoples, neither the Caucasian Christians nor those of the Danubian provinces were strong enough to be of aid; and the Russians were too far away and too busily engaged in throwing off the Mongol yoke. Help could only come from the West. But the West would not help a schismatic nation with alien traditions. Could Byzantium survive uncommitted to either camp? Or was there only the choice between absorption by the Moslem

East or integration with the Latin West?

For some reason that historians have never explained, this period of political decline in Byzantium was accompanied by a cultural life more eager and productive than at any other time in the Empire's history. Artistically and intellectually the Palaeologan era is extraordinarily rich. The mosaics and frescoes of the early fourteenth century in the Church of the Chora—the Kahriye Cami of today—have a vigor and a freshness as well as a technical skill that make the Italian work of the same time look clumsy and crude. Work of similar quality was produced elsewhere in Constantinople, as well as in Thessalonica, and on a humbler scale in the provinces, so long as there was money to pay for it. But money was running short before the fourteenth century was ended. Even in the middle of the century it was noticed that the jewels in the diadems used for the coronation of John VI and his Empress were made of glass. By the end of the century it was only in distant provinces, at Mistra in the Peloponnese, or on Mount Athos, that new churches were built; and they were decorated in fresco, not mosaic. But intellectual life, which did not require such financial backing, lasted on. The University of Constantinople had been refounded at the end of the thirteenth century by a great minister, Theodore Metoechites, a man of high taste and learning, to whose patronage most of the decoration in the Chora is due. He personally inspired the brilliant generation of scholars that followed. The chief intellectuals of the fourteenth century, men like Nicephorus Gregoras the historian, Gregory Palamas the theologian, Nicephorus Cabasilas the mystic, and the philosophers Demetrius Cydones and Akyndinus, all at some time studied at this university and came under the influence of Metoechites. Each of these scholars was individual in his thought; they all tended to disagree with each other. There were certain main controversies. There was the philosophical controversy that had agitated the Greeks for nearly two thousand years—Platonism against

Aristotelianism. Each philosopher had his preference, though good churchmen were neutral. The Church used Platonic terms and Aristotelian methodology, but, secure in its apophatic theology, it held that philosophy was incapable of solving divine problems, since God was essentially unknowable. Of the two schools it regarded Platonism as being the more dangerous because it was the more seductive; and Byzantine Platonists from time to time came under the anathema of the Church. Then there was a theological controversy, arising out of the theory of mysticism and concerned with the uncreated Energies of God. The doctrine of the Energies found its main support in the monasteries, which tended to be anti-intellectual. But its great exponent, Palamas, whose name is often given to the doctrine, was himself a distinguished intellectual, though antihumanist in his tastes; and his allies included such humanist intellectuals as Cabasilas or the Emperor John VI Cantacuzenus. Finally there was the question of union with the Roman Church.

This was the dominant question. It had its purely political side. To many Byzantine statesman help from the West seemed essential for the Empire's survival; and if help could only be obtained at the price of submission to the Roman Church, there must be submission. Michael Palaeologus tried to counter Western plans for avenging the fall of the Latin Empire by committing his people to union with Rome at the Council of Lyons. The union was deeply resented by most Byzantines; and when the danger was past, his successor, Andronicus II, repudiated it. But now the situation was different. Union was intended not to buy off an enemy but to win friends. John V personally submitted to Rome in 1369, but cautiously refused to involve his subjects, though he hoped to persuade them to follow him.

Neither Michael nor John V was a theologian. To each the political advantages of union outweighed everything else. For theologians the question was more difficult. From

early times Eastern and Western Christendom had been drifting apart theologically. Now there was one main dogmatic issue dividing them, on the Procession of the Holy Ghost and the Latin addition of the word "*Filioque*" to the Creed. There were less hotly contended issues, as on the question of Purgatory, about which the East refused to be dogmatic. There were differences in usage; in particular, the Greeks used leavened bread at the Sacrament and the Latins unleavened. And there was one fundamental ecclesiastical point: did the Bishop of Rome enjoy honorary primacy or absolute supremacy in the Church? And could he pronounce on doctrine, or was that for an Ecumenical Council alone? The Byzantines in general felt strongly about their traditions and were unwilling to abandon any of them; while the very nature of the Roman Church forbade it to make any basic concessions. There were a few Byzantine scholars who were ready to accept Roman supremacy if their own creed and usages were not absolutely condemned, particularly after about 1340, when the philosopher Demetrius Cydones translated the works of Thomas Aquinas into Greek. Aquinas' scholasticism impressed and attracted them, and proved to them that Italian scholarship was not to be despised. There was already a growing intercourse between the scholars of Italy and Byzantium. The Italians showed a flattering desire to study the philosophical works and traditions of the Byzantines and to offer Byzantine scholars lucrative professorial chairs in Italy. The idea of integrating Byzantine and Italian culture became increasingly attractive; and if it involved submission to Rome, that did not matter, considering the honor given to Rome in the past—so long as Greek traditions were adequately safeguarded.

The unionists were to be found only among the politicians and the intellectuals. The monks and lesser clergy were bitterly opposed to union. They were unmoved by the cultural argument. They were proud of their faith and their traditions; they remembered the hardships suffered by their

forefathers at the hands of Latin hierarchs under the Latin Emperors. It was they who influenced the common people; who, too, remembered clearly the story of the Fourth Crusade. Nor were all the intellectuals prepared for union. Many of them considered Roman theology wrong; they would not accept the addition to the Creed and had doubts about Papal supremacy. Anyone who supported the Palamite doctrine of the Energies of God, which was decreed Orthodox in 1351, could not admit Thomism, in which there was no place for it.

These were the problems that excited Byzantine thinkers in the last decades of the Empire. Their lively disputes were in striking contrast to the atmosphere of material decay around them. Constantinople by the end of the fourteenth century was a shadow of its former self. The population which, with that of the suburbs, had numbered over a million in the twelfth century had shrunk to about a hundred thousand and was still shrinking; and the suburbs were deserted. To picture the city as it had now become, we must envisage not a continuous town but a series of townlets and villages separated by orchards and fields and copses. Even in the greatest days of the city its sixteen miles of encircling walls had enclosed parks and gardens dividing the various quarters. But now entire quarters were ruined and overgrown. A Byzantine writer of the time tells in a letter to a friend of the coming spring to the city, of the nightingales singing in the woods and the wild roses blossoming in the hedgerows. You would think that you were in the depths of the country, he says. Indeed, the country had penetrated into the town. At the southeastern tip of the city the Great Palace buildings were no longer habitable. The last Latin Emperor in his extremity, after selling the holy relics to Saint Louis and before pawning his son to the Venetians, had stripped the lead off the palace roofs and disposed of them for cash. The Palaeologan emperors never had the money to restore the damage. Next door, the Hippodrome was crumbling; the young men of

the aristocracy used it as a polo ground. The Patriarchal Palace across the square was barely habitable, though the Patriarch retained his offices there. In all the quarter only the great cathedral of Saint Sophia was in good repair. Its maintenance was a sacred duty for which special funds were set aside. The main street that ran along the central ridge of the city was still lined with shops and houses, though the city's second cathedral, the Holy Apostles, which stood on the ridge, was in danger of collapsing. The bazaar quarter sloping down to the Golden Horn was still active, and there were merchant houses and warehouses along the shore. Though far more trade was carried on at Galata, across the Horn, there were still Moslem and Slav merchants who preferred to do business in Constantinople rather than in an Italian colony. There were monasteries and churches scattered about the city, some with villages clustering around. But the only other populous districts were at either end of the land walls. Where they touched the Sea of Marmora, in the Studium quarter, were the buildings of the university and the Patriarchal Academy. At the other end, on a hill above the Golden Horn, was the Palace of Blachernae, where the Emperors now lived, and below it the houses of the dwindling aristocracy and their hangers-on. There were still a few fine mansions there; and you still might see a few richly clad lords and ladies, whose wealth came from town property or from maritime trade. There were also a few hostels for pilgrims, coming mainly from Russia to admire the churches and the relics that they contained.

Of the other cities of the Empire Thessalonica had an air of greater prosperity; for it was still the main port for the central Balkans. But it had never fully recovered from the period in the middle of the fourteenth century when it was held for some years by left-wing revolutionaries known as the Zealots, who had destroyed many palaces and merchant houses before they were suppressed. And Thessalonica was to fall finally to the Turks in 1430. Mistra, near Sparta,

where a cadet of the Imperial house ruled as Despot of the Morea, boasted of a palace and several churches and monasteries; but it was little more than a village.

This tragic remnant of an Empire was the heritage that fell to the Emperor Manuel II in 1391. He himself was a tragic figure. His youth had been spent among family quarrels and wars, in which he alone had been loyal to his father, John V, whom on one occasion he had to rescue from a debtors' prison at Venice. He had spent some time as a hostage at the Turkish Court and had had to swear allegiance to the Sultan and even lead a Byzantine regiment for his overlord against the free Byzantine city of Philadelphia. He was himself a scholar. He wrote for his Turkish friends a little book comparing Christianity with Islam, which is a model of its kind. He tried to reform the monasteries, and he spared what money he could for the university. Politically, he saw the need for help from the West; but he hoped to obtain it from the lay princes there, not from the Papacy, which was at the time weakened by the Great Schism, and thus to avoid the need for union. His advice to his son and successor, John VIII, was to keep up negotiations over union on a friendly basis but to abstain from commitments that might be hard to fulfill. He himself traveled in search of allies as far as Paris and on to London, where the chronicler Adam of Usk was moved almost to tears at the spectacle of a Roman Emperor reduced to such poverty. He was well received in both capitals and particularly enjoyed arguing with the professors at the Sorbonne, for whose benefit he wrote a treatise explaining wherein he disagreed with Latin theology. But he received no material help, and had to hurry home on the news of a Turkish advance on Constantinople. This siege was lifted when Timur the Tartar attacked the Turks in the rear and routed them. But they soon recovered, though dynastic quarrels prevented them from making another attempt against Constantinople for several decades, apart from an abortive siege in 1423.



The Church of the Chora (Kariye Cami): the fourteenth-century mosaics of the inner narthex. (*The Byzantine Institute.*)

At Constantinople the older generation of scholars had died. Apart from the Emperor the leading intellectual figure was now Joseph Bryennius, headmaster of the Patriarchal Academy and professor at the university, a great teacher who educated the last brilliant generation of Byzantine scholars. He was well versed in Western as well as Greek literature and aided the Emperor in introducing Western studies into the university curriculum; and he readily welcomed Western scholars. Indeed, the future Pope Pius II, writing of these times, says that any Italian with a claim to scholarship had to pay a visit to Constantinople. But, like Manuel, Bryennius was opposed to Church union. He could not accept Latin theology, nor would he abandon Byzantine traditions.

A curious change that occurred during these years was the re-emergence of the word "Hellene." Hitherto the Byzantines had used "Hellene," except when it was applied to language, to mean heathen Greek, as opposed to Christian. Now the humanists began to use it to mean Byzantine. The fashion started in Thessalonica, where the intellectuals were very conscious of being Greeks. Cabasilas, who was a Thessalonian, writes of "our community of Hellas"; and by the end of the century Manuel was often addressed as "Emperor of the Hellenes." A few centuries earlier any Western embassy that arrived at Constantinople with letters for "the Emperor of the Greeks" would not have been received at Court. The chief advocate of the new term was a philosopher slightly younger than Bryennius, George Gemistus Plethon, the most original of all Byzantine thinkers, who settled at Mistra and founded a Platonic Academy there. He wrote a number of works pleading for a reorganization of the state along Platonic lines. Only this, he thought, would restore the Hellenic world. He made suggestions on social, economic, financial, and military affairs, mainly based on Plato's. In religion he demanded a return to Platonism, with a touch of Epicureanism and of Zoroastrianism added. He had little use for Christianity

and liked to write of God as Zeus. But the manuscript in which he aired his religious views fell, after his death and after the fall of Constantinople, into the hands of the Patriarch, who read it with growing fascination and horror and eventually, rather reluctantly, ordered it to be burnt. Only a few extracts have survived.

Manuel II died in 1425. His son, John VIII, neglected his advice and decided that union with Rome was essential. Like all Greeks, even the unionists, he would only accept union as a result of a General Council; but the Conciliar movement in the West now made a Council feasible. The opposition to union was still strong, in spite of the Turkish menace. It was not unreasonable, even politically. As more and more Greeks fell under Turkish rule their connection with Byzantium could only be maintained through the Church. But if the Patriarchate committed itself to the West, would they follow suit? The Turks would certainly not approve. And would the Caucasian and Russian Orthodox also follow? Union with Rome would not only involve the abandonment of traditions dear to the Byzantines themselves, but might well cause a schism within their Church. A memorandum dated 1437 tells us that of the sixty-seven metropolitan sees dependent on the Patriarch of Constantinople only eight were in the Emperor's dominions and seven in the Viceroyalty of the Peloponnese. That is to say, union might cost the Patriarch the loss of more than three quarters of his dependent bishops. This was a formidable practical argument to add to the natural reluctance of the Byzantines to yield over their doctrines and their liturgy.

Nevertheless John VIII was determined to take the risk. In 1439 he brought a delegation to discuss union at a Council held first at Ferrara and soon moved to Florence, in the presence of the Pope. The detailed story of the Council of Florence makes arid reading. There were quarrels over precedence. The debates themselves were conducted over patristic texts, that being the only common ground that

both sides would recognize. It was decided that the Fathers of the Church, Latin as well as Greek, must be accepted as having been divinely inspired and their views on the disputed points must be followed. Unfortunately, inspiration does not seem to involve consistency. The Fathers did not always agree with each other and sometimes even contradicted themselves. In the debates it must be admitted that the Latins had the best of it. Their spokesmen were highly trained controversialists who worked together as a team. The Greek bishops were on the whole a sorry lot. Some of the best had refused to attend; and the Emperor was forced to raise three learned monks to metropolitan sees in order to have proper representation. These were Bessarion of Trebizond, metropolitan of Nicaea; Isidore, metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia; and Mark Eugenicus, metropolitan of Ephesus. He added four leading lay philosophers, George Scholarius, George Amiroutzes, George of Trebizond, and the aged Plethon. The Eastern Patriarchs were asked to nominate delegates from among the attendant bishops, but agreed only with reservations; their delegates had no plenipotentiary powers. By Greek tradition every Greek bishop, including the Patriarch, is charismatically equal, equally inspired on doctrine. Thus each Greek disputant went his own way. The Patriarch, a dear old man called Joseph II, the bastard son of a Bulgarian prince and a Greek lady, was not very clever nor in good health and carried no weight. The Emperor himself would intervene to prevent the discussion of dangerous points, such as the doctrine of the Energies. There was no coherence and no consistent policy among the Greeks.

Of the philosophers, George Scholarius, George Amiroutzes, and George of Trebizond, all of them admirers of Aquinas, accepted union. Plethon rejected it; he disapproved of the Latin Church even more than of the Greek, as it was even more rigid and scholastic. But he had a wonderful time at Florence, giving lectures on Plato; and Cosimo de' Medici founded a Platonic Academy in his honor. The

Patriarch, after agreeing with the Latins that the Greek formula of the Holy Ghost proceeding *through* the Son meant the same as the Latin of proceeding *from* the Son, fell ill and died. An unkind critic remarked that after mixing his prepositions, what could he do but die? The metropolitans Bessarion and Isidore were both of them impressed by the scholarly superiority of the Latins, and were won over to their view. All the other bishops, under pressure from the Emperor, but some under protest, signed the act of union, with the one exception of Mark of Ephesus, who refused to sign, though menaced with the loss of his see. The act itself, while it permitted certain Greek liturgical practices, was otherwise a statement of Latin doctrine, though the phrase on the Pope's relationship with the Councils was slightly ambiguous.

It was easier to sign than to implement the union. When the delegation returned to Constantinople its reception was so hostile that soon Bessarion, though personally a well-respected man, found it wise to retire to Italy, where he was joined by Isidore, whom the Russians repudiated. The Eastern Patriarchs refused to be bound by the signatures of their delegates. The Emperor had difficulty in finding a new Patriarch for Constantinople. His first nominee died almost at once; and his successor hastened to leave the thankless post and to join the other unionists in Italy. Mark of Ephesus was degraded, only to be treated as the real head of the Church. Of the philosophers, George of Trebizond went to Italy. George Scholarius began to feel doubts; he retired to a monastery and there decided against union, though he still retained his admiration for Aquinas. On Mark's death he became the leader of the anti-unionists. George Amiroutzes went even further and began to explore, vainly, the possibilities of a union with Islam. The Emperor himself, under his mother's influence, ceased from pressing the union. All that it had achieved was bitterness and unhappiness for the dying city. Had it been followed by a successful Crusade, things might have been different.

But, though a great expedition set out from the West in 1444, it was easily annihilated by the Turks at Varna.

Historians have sometimes wondered why the Byzantines should have thus, wantonly it seems, rejected their one last chance of help. Some of the more thoughtful of the Emperor's subjects believed, rightly, that the West would never be able or willing to send help effective enough to check the brilliantly organized military power of the Ottoman Turks. Others were moved by fear of schism within the Church and the loss of the congregations outside the Emperor's dominions. There were many who believed Roman theology and doctrine to be wrong; they would imperil their souls by accepting it. In that age of faith eternal life still counted for more than life on earth. It was better to suffer political annihilation than everlasting damnation. Others again took a farsighted mundane view; they felt that the only chance now of reuniting the Greek Church, and with it the Greek people, lay in accepting Turkish bondage, to which already the majority of the Greeks were subject. It might thus be possible to revive the Orthodox Greek nation and, in time, to throw off the infidel yoke and re-create Byzantium. This was the half-expressed hope of George Scholarius and the Orthodox leaders. The remark attributed, probably incorrectly, to the last Chief Minister of the Empire, Lucas Notaras: "Better the Sultan's turban than the Cardinal's hat," was not so outrageous as it sounds. Greek integrity might indeed be better preserved by a united people under infidel rule than by a fragment attached to the rim of the Western world. Some influence must have been wielded by the many Greeks living in relative security if not in freedom under the Sultan, some even occupying posts in his administration. There was also an element of pure defeatism. The Byzantines had always inclined toward pessimism. In the damp, melancholy climate of the Bosphorus the natural gaiety of the Greeks was dimmed. Even in the great days of the Empire men had whispered of prophecies that it could not last forever. It

was well-known that on stones throughout the city or in books written by sages such as Apollonius of Tyana or the Emperor Leo the Wise the list of Emperors had been given, and it was drawing to an end. The reign of Anti-Christ was due. A few believed hopefully that the Mother of God would never allow a city dedicated to her to pass to an infidel faith. At the last moment a miracle would occur to save it. But that hope was wearing thin.

To Bessarion and his fellow humanists, working eagerly in Italy to obtain help for their compatriots, the atmosphere in Constantinople seemed strange and foolish and wrong. They believed that union with the West could still bring new cultural as well as political vigor. Who can say which view was right? All that was obvious was that no one could remain uncommitted.

John VIII died in 1448, to be succeeded by his brother, Constantine XI, the fourth but eldest surviving of Manuel II's six sons, and the ablest of them, a man whom even his opponents revered. He had been regent in the Peloponnese, and was crowned Emperor there at Mistra, by the local bishop. It was a break with all precedent; but there was no Patriarch to crown him in Constantinople, and delay was unwise. One of his brothers had tried to seize the throne there, but was thwarted by the aged Empress-Mother and the senior officials. There was little that Constantine could do. He sent west for more help. His wife was dead; and he sent east, to the Orthodox kingdom of Georgia, for a bride. The Georgians promised a princess with a large dowry, but, luckily for her, she delayed her departure. The West promised a little aid, but only if the Union of Florence were consummated. From his brothers, now quarreling in the Peloponnese, and from his cousin the Emperor of Trebizond he could expect nothing. Their danger was almost as great as his; and they had no troops to spare.

In 1451 a new Sultan ascended the Ottoman throne, a brilliant, energetic youth of twenty-one called Mohammed. He soon showed that he intended to take Constantinople. He



Mohammed II (1430-1481), the conqueror of Constantinople.
(Bettmann Archive.)

ruthlessly occupied the few remaining Byzantine cities round the coast. Close to the capital itself, at the narrows of the Bosphorus, in officially Byzantine territory, he built the castle of Rumeli Hisar. From it and from a castle on the Asiatic bank opposite he could control all the shipping going up and down the Straits. He already controlled the Dardanelles. It was clear that the city would soon be attacked.

In the autumn of 1452, in answer to the Emperor's desperate appeal, the Pope sent to Constantinople Isidore of Kiev, now a cardinal, with two hundred soldiers and orders

to proclaim the union in Saint Sophia. At the sight of the soldiers the people of the city welcomed Isidore; but when they saw how few they were their hatred of the Latins revived. At the union ceremony in the cathedral only the Emperor and some of his Court were present. Even his chief minister, Lucas Notaras, held aloof; and outside of the official world no one came.

During the next few months the atmosphere in the city was bitter and sad. A few more Italian troops arrived, notably about a thousand Genoese, under a distinguished commander, Giustiniani. The Pope promised some ships; but they set out too late. The Emperor told his faithful secretary Phrantzes to find out how many citizens there were capable of bearing arms. The result was so depressing that the figure was kept secret; it seems to have been not much more than five thousand. In all, with allies and mercenaries, there were some eight thousand men to defend the city; while outside the Sultan was gathering an army of about a hundred thousand, with all the latest devices of war. There was one ray of hope. The Sultan's Grand Vizier was known to believe that Constantinople served a useful purpose as a neutral trading-mart. Perhaps he would persuade his master not to attack. But everyone knew that the city was really doomed. It was the divine punishment, men said, for the sins of the people, and the sin of trying to sell the Church to the Latins. The Emperor was still revered in spite of his religious policy. But the Cardinal and his clerics were hated. No one would enter the churches that they and their supporters served. Saint Sophia stood empty. The Emperor in his palace realized that the end was coming and that he would be the chief sacrificial victim. His friends urged him to retire while there was still time to the Peloponnese, where resistance with the aid of Western troops might still be possible. But he would not leave his city to its fate. He would perish with his Empire.

The winter months were melancholy. In April, when the nightingales had arrived and the gardens in the city were

bursting into flower, the great Turkish army moved up against the walls. To that challenge, in spite of their quarrels, the Greeks responded with the heroism of their race. The end might be inevitable; it might even be desirable; but pride would not let them accept it without a fight. They forgot their bickering to rally round their Emperor.

The siege of Constantinople lasted for six gallant, terrible weeks. At last, in the evening of Monday, May 28, 1453, the Turks were seen to be making preparations for a final assault on the morrow. As darkness gathered, the whole population of the city, men, women, and children, with all the soldiers that could be spared from the walls, Greeks and Italians, unionists and anti-unionists, crowded into Saint Sophia for the last Holy Liturgy to be celebrated beneath its dome. In this final moment differences were forgotten. Priests of both parties served at the altars, and the people took communion without discrimination. The Emperor came himself with some of his captains and communicated, then hurried back to the walls. All night the service lasted; and the priests were still chanting at dawn, when the Turkish hordes broke through the desperate defense and forced their way into the city.

The last phase of Byzantine history had been miserable and inept, full of admirable scholarship, indeed, but full of feckless politics and bitter wrangling. But the curtain fell on a scene of heroic splendor, in the manner of high tragedy.

The Elizabethan Revolution in Historiography

Fritz Levy

Establishing the truth has always been the principal aim of historians, just as the methods used for that purpose have been the study of historiographers. In England, during the sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries, the historian's object was the same as that of his predecessors and successors; but, during this time, the methods of arriving at the truth changed greatly, not least because of changes in the concept of the utility of history.

At the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the *Mirror for Magistrates*, a continuation of the medieval *Fall of Princes*, presented its readers with a view of history based on a purpose of moral teaching. History was intended to teach the magistrate, as well as the average Elizabethan, that virtue was rewarded and vice punished.* Such an idea was

* *The Mirror for Magistrates*, ed. Lily B. Campbell (Cambridge, Mass., 1938), 63-7. For the *Mirror* generally, see Miss Campbell's long introduction, and her paper *Tudor Conceptions of History and Tragedy* in "A Mirror for Magistrates," University of California Faculty Lectures, 1936.

A
M I R O V R
F O R M A G I -
S T R A T E S :

BEING A TRVE CHRONICLE
HISTORIE OF THE VNTIMELY
falles of such vnfortunate Princes and men of note,
as haue happened since the first entrance of Brute
into this Island, vntill this our
latter Age.

NEWLY ENLARGED WITH A LAST
part, called *A Winter nights Vision*, being an addition
of such Tragedies, especially famous, as are exempted
in the former Historie, with a Poem annexed,
called *Englands Eliza.*



AT LONDON
Imprinted by Felix Kyngston.
1610.

Title page of an early edition of *A Mirror for Magistrates*. (Special Collections, Columbia University.)

by no means new, nor was it even primarily Christian in its origin—it may be found in Tacitus—though Christian morality, and especially the Catholic doctrine of works, fitted into it very well. A little more than half a century later, Camden's *Annals of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth* appeared: its doctrine, too, was didactic, though in a different way. Truth, as ever, was its principal aim, and Camden also intended, as his predecessors had done, to teach rulers how to behave: not, however, in terms of morality, but in terms of statecraft. Camden presented a picture, drawn in great detail, but arrived at very few conclusions—that was the statesman's job. Only a few years thereafter, Sir Robert Cotton published his *Short View of the Long Life and Raigne of Henry III*, in which the conclusions were drawn very specifically, in a series of political aphorisms, and in which the narration of events was reduced to a minimum.

In many ways, the *Mirror* and Cotton's work are very much alike. In both, events are reduced to a skeleton intended to support a body of doctrine; in both, too, the truth of the doctrine begins to take on more importance than historical truth. The two differ, however, in their teaching: the *Mirror* would teach men how to behave in relation to their God, while Cotton teaches them how to behave in relation to one another. It is this change that it is our purpose to investigate.

A few preliminary comments are necessary. First of all, investigating every historical treatise written between 1559 and 1627 would be impossible, as well as needless: history, as one of the principal interests of the Elizabethans, proliferated, while its authors' ways of looking at the past were very few. Secondly, these differing approaches to the problems of history overlapped, with the result that the kind of writing represented by the *Mirror* continued long after the publication of Cotton's work. Likewise, Cotton had

predecessors who embodied at least some of his views, though not in so extreme a form.*

A Mirror for Magistrates. Wherein may be seen by example others, with how grievous plagues vices are punished: and how frail and unstable worldly prosperity is found, even of those whom Fortune seemeth most highly to favor. The title of the book, given here full length, serves to explain what its authors intended. History is not mentioned, for it is only the stage setting for a moral drama. William Baldwin, who organized the book and who is depicted as presiding at the meetings of the authors—these meetings being the only link between one story and another, somewhat in the manner of the *Decameron*—tells us that the facts are drawn from Fabian, Hall, and More, with Hall to be the final authority in cases of conflict.** The *Mirror* represents one extreme of Tudor historical writing: the purpose of the book has become more important than its historicity.

Baldwin's *Mirror* is an example of the older way of dealing with the historical problem, a way dependent ultimately on the optimistic view of man developed by Pico della Mirandola and his neo-Platonic associates. Man is a microcosm, lying between the animals and the angels, able to partake of the nature of both. God and man are close to one another, and the image of the Deity is always before man.*** Baldwin is not showing us God's operation in the world for itself; his interest is in showing the relation between man's actions and God. History is not the record of God's hand on earth, nor is it, here, an account bounded

• Notably Sir John Hayward, in his *Life of Henry IV* (1599) and in his *Lives of the Three Normans, Kings of England* (1613).

** *Mirror*, 110-11.

*** Pico della Mirandola, "Oration on the Dignity of Man," in *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, ed. Ernst Cassirer, P. O. Kristeller, and J. H. Randall, Jr. (Chicago, 1948), 223-54; the same volume contains other neo-Platonic writings. See also E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (London, 1943).

on the one side by the Fall and the Crucifixion and on the other by the Resurrection. Baldwin discusses men, and in doing so wishes to teach other men how to behave. But his framework is moral: a man's punishment for misbehavior comes not from his fellow men but from God.

The world of Baldwin—and of Pico—is an ordered one, where everything has a place in relation to every other thing. Baldwin's picture of the world is a simple one, but the simplicity is reminiscent more of the Old Testament than of the New. Divine justice is the mainspring of the universe of the *Mirror*; put bluntly, the idea is one of man bargaining with God, of offering a *quid pro quo*. The good are rewarded, the evil punished. This has happened, is happening, and will continue to happen, and the message of history is to make this clear to men.

Basically, Baldwin's picture of man's relationship to God is that of the accused with his judge; and he emphasizes this relationship by the pretense that each of the historical characters discussed is speaking through his author, appealing to a court made up of Baldwin and his friends. Though Baldwin was a Protestant—so much so that Queen Mary refused permission for the publication of the book during her reign—nonetheless his view of history is essentially Catholic. Neither grace nor election play any part in the *Mirror*; the doctrine is that of works.

Baldwin's Renaissance view of the universe involves not only the relation of man to God, but also the interrelations of these with nature and the supernatural. All of creation is subordinate to God directly; hence, portents are of importance. An eclipse or a comet, as well as a more mundane "strange birth" is symbolic of God's feeling about the human situation. A disruption in the world of nature indicates a dislocation in the world of man. A portent is part of a series of reflections: first, man's evil disrupts one part of God's world, and the chaos on earth is reflected in a disturbance above; this, in its turn, warns man of God's anger and presages an even greater break-up of the normal

course of events. In the Florentine Guicciardini's account of his own times, the foolishness of the Italians brings on a series of omens which precede the French invasion. In Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* lions roam the streets.* All this is part of an ordered universe, all of whose parts are in harmony.

If the idea of an ordered universe is combined with that of history as teacher, the reason for the insistence that causes must be shown becomes evident.

But seeing causes are the chiefest things
That should be noted of the story writers,
That men may learn what ends all causes brings
They be unworthy the name of Chroniclers,
That leave them clean out of their registers.
Or doubtfully report them: for the fruit
Of reading stories, standeth in the suit.**

The basic principle behind the *Mirror* is man's free will. Once that is granted, then the only way in which history can be useful to man is to show why other men behaved as they did. Greed and ambition are evil, justice and obedience good; each makes men behave in a particular way, and it is the object of history to trace man's footsteps on the way to heaven or hell. If the causes reported are incorrect, or omitted altogether, then history fails of its purpose. Hence, the first necessity of useful history is the pursuit of truth.

From this, several other generalizations are drawn. History is essentially static, though specific events vary one from another. Man's nature remains forever the same: if we are basically different from our forefathers, then we have nothing to learn from an account of their doings. The causes of events duplicate: any ruler who allows favorites

* Francesco Guicciardini, *The Historie of Guicciardin*, trans. Geffray Fenton (London, 1618), 31-2; *Julius Caesar*, I, iii.

** *Mirror*, 198. Here, as elsewhere in this essay, the spelling is modernized.

to control the state will invite the same difficulties. Edward II was deposed because Piers Gaveston held sway; Richard II lost his kingdom because of Bushy and Bagot. Any alteration in the structure of an ordered universe, if repeated, led inevitably to the same result.

The ordered universe resulted in a definite and simple view of history, which suffered from only one disadvantage: past events occasionally refused to co-operate. Periodically, a man rose to the top for no observable reason; and, perhaps, he fell again due to his prince's whim. As a result, the concept of fortune was introduced. The universe was at once permanent and mutable: the structure of the earth itself changed, men were born and died, yet men's characters and the causes of action remained forever the same. Fortune added another variable, acting within the framework already established; it could change a man's condition, though it could not make him young again. It was fortune that raised Cardinal Wolsey to the heights and then flung him back into the depths. No one denied that Wolsey's own acts had something to do with it: he was certainly efficient and able in the beginning, overbearing at the end. But his acts were insufficient to explain so rapid a rise and so disastrous a fall, and so fortune was called in to fill the gap.*

The use of fortune led to certain difficulties. On the one hand, if not carefully handled, fortune began to impinge on God's justice. When the Duke of Buckingham, about to face Richard III in the field, found that his men melted away, he said:

For such is Fortune when she list to frown,
Who seems most sure, him soonest whirls she down.**

* This seems to be the interpretation of Wolsey's servant and biographer, George Cavendish, *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey*, ed. S. W. Singer, (London, 1827). On fortune generally, Raymond Chapman, "Fortune and Mutability in Elizabethan Literature," *Cambridge Journal V*, no. 6 (March, 1952), 374-82.

** *Mirror*, 332.

Yet it is perfectly clear that Buckingham had sinned, first in helping Richard depose his nephews and again in his overweening pride. On the other hand, since fortune tended to attack the mighty, a doctrine of quietism might evolve. So Jane Shore says that

The settled mind is free from Fortune's power,
They need not fear who look not up aloft,
But they that climb are careful every hour,
For when they fall they light not very soft....•

Carried to its logical extreme, this second view of the power of fortune was tantamount to suggesting that all ambition was dangerous and hence to be avoided; yet even the very best of churchmen would have applied this only to unseemly ambition.

The disproportion of event to cause was not the only difficulty that had to be faced by the authors of the *Mirror*. Again, the stubbornness of historical reality was to blame: as Shakespeare had it, "Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall."^{••} If the theory that God directly rewarded or punished every action seemed on occasion to break down, adjustments were necessary. Providence provided one solution: it was to this that the haphazard functionings of the divine were attributed, and any question could be parried by saying that man simply was not able to understand all God's doings, and that it was presumptuous of him to try. Unfortunately, such a solution ran directly counter to history's didactic function, for the direct link between an act and its consequences was broken.

Another recourse was in Scripture: God might not punish evil-doing in the person of the offender but might, instead, bring about the downfall of his children or grandchildren. Taken to its logical extreme, this led to the theories of Polydore Vergil and, especially, of Edward Hall. Hall's

• Ibid., 381.

•• *Measure for Measure*, II, i.



Polydore Vergil (1470?-1555?). (*Bettmann Archive.*)

interpretation of the Wars of the Roses was to see the action as occurring in a series of cycles: Henry IV's usurpation led to the downfall of his grandson; Edward IV's perjury before the citizens of York and his murder of the Duke of Clarence led to his own children's death.* Raleigh

* On Polydore Vergil, Denys Hay, *Polydore Vergil* (Oxford, 1952), and also Hay's introduction to Vergil's *Anglica Historia*, Camden Society LXXIV (London, 1950). On Hall, E. M. W. Tillyard, *Shakespeare's History Plays* (London, 1944), 40-50.

added another cycle still: Henry VII's murder of various relatives meant that his line, too, would not survive the reign of his grandchildren.[•] Obviously, the historian's opportunities for moralizing were tripled; nonetheless, even this solution was not altogether satisfactory. An occasional malefactor still escaped scot-free; worse yet, there was no provision for sufferers who were innocent. Moreover, the immediacy of punishment or reward was removed; given the capricious operations of fortune, a man might no longer be certain of receiving his due.

Nonetheless, within the limits of truth, this was the best that the Renaissance theory could do. Any other solutions to the problem of the "stubborn fact" had to come either from outside the orderly structure so laboriously built, or the truth had to be perverted. In various situations, the authors of the *Mirror* resorted to both of these extremes. In the very beginning of the book, just after a discussion of the value of history, the author of the Preface—in order to cover every possible contingency—remarks:

And although you shall find in it, that some have for their virtue been envied and murdered, yet cease not to be virtuous, but do your offices to the uttermost: punish sin boldly, both in yourselves and other, so shall God (whose Lieutenants you are) either so maintain you, that no malice shall prevail, or if it do, it shall be for your good, and to your eternal glory both here and in heaven, which I beseech God you may covet and attain. Amen.^{••}

This, of course, subverts the purpose of the book, and it seems clear that its author realized that it would. Obviously, there is nothing un-Christian about saying that man's reward would be in heaven; on the other hand, the point of the *Mirror* was to show that the usual place for receiving

• Sir Walter Raleigh. *History of the World*, in *Works* (Oxford, 1829), II, viii-xx.

•• *Mirror*, 67.

one's just deserts was here on earth. Later, in one of the interspersed notes to the reader which served to hold the book together, the author says:

And where we swerve from his [Hall's] reasons and causes of divers doings, there we gather upon conjecture such things as seem most probable, or at the least most convenient for the furtherance of our purpose.*

With this, the game is quite lost.** Once the reader discovered that the only way history's moral could be demonstrated was to pervert the very facts of history, then the whole edifice collapsed. Truth, especially in the "reasons and causes of divers doings," was the foundation upon which the structure of moral interpretation rested. Once truth and moral utility were gone—and it became evident that their demise was inevitable—the only way out that remained was to build an entirely new theory.

Although the authors of the *Mirror* understood, to some extent, the difficulties that faced them, their reaction to them was, by and large, to ignore them. The first writer, in England at least, to oppose the entire theory on which the *Mirror* depended was Sir Philip Sidney:

Now, to that which commonly is attributed to the praise of histories, in respect of the notable learning is gotten by marking the success, as though therein a man should see virtue exalted and vice punished, truly that commendation is peculiar to poetry and far off from history. For, indeed, poetry ever setteth virtue so out in her best colours, making Fortune her well-waiting handmaid, that one must needs be enamoured of her.

• Ibid., 267.

•• Samuel Daniel does something similar when he suggests that it makes little difference if a date is incorrect as long as it does not affect our understanding of the event in question. But how can it fail to do so? *The Collection of the Historie of England* (London, 1618), A4r. Nonetheless, Miss McKisack considers Daniel a truthful and sympathetic historian: May McKisack, "Samuel Daniel as Historian," *Review of English Studies* XXIII (July 1947), 226-43.

...But the historian, being captived to the truth of a foolish world, is many times a terror from well-doing, and an encouragement to unbridled wickedness....*

Sidney's friend and contemporary, William Camden, while not the first to write in the new, practical manner, was yet one of the earliest, and his enormous prestige—gained from his antiquarian work, *Britannia*—was of great assistance in establishing the new way of writing history as respectable.

Camden's *History of... Princess Elizabeth* (better known as *Annals*) is a detailed listing of the events of forty-five years, with the causes added. Primarily, the emphasis is on England, more specifically on the various struggles Protestant England fought with Catholic Spain at home and abroad. Though Camden claims that truth is his chief purpose, it is clear that his interest is in presenting the English view of the Elizabethan Settlement. The *Annals* are a rejoinder to the Catholic historians of the Continent, and a paean for Queen Elizabeth, and their recounting of the events is colored by this.**

King James, not surprisingly, had strong views about the events that led to the deposition and eventual death of his mother Queen Mary, and these were well known to the historians of his time. James had, in fact, tried to influence the French historian, De Thou, in favor of his own theory. Stripped to its essentials, the argument was whether Mary was responsible for her own misfortunes or whether, as James suggested, the real villain was Mary's illegitimate half-brother, the Earl of Murray... George Buchanan, who

* Sir Philip Sidney, *Defence of Poesy*, ed. D. M. Macardle (London, 1919), 19.

** See, for example, William Camden, *The History of... Princess Elizabeth* (London, 1675), b3v and 31-2.

... Camden discusses the proper way of interpreting the events of 1566-8 in a series of letters exchanged with Jacques de Thou. Extracts have been published in Rev. J. Collinson, *The Life of Thuanus* (London, 1807), 137-52.

had been James' tutor, and a partisan of Murray, had formed European opinion with his *Rerum Scotticarum Historia*, and it was this opinion that Camden consciously set himself to attack.* The result was a partisan history, in favor of Mary and hence acceptable to James, which nonetheless did not overstep the bounds of truth, though it trod very close to them. Camden's own description of what he had done was "Things doubtful I have interpreted favorably."** It was possible—indeed, it still is—to interpret the confusing events of Mary's deposition from many points of view: Camden chose that one which was most politic for his own age.

Besides its obvious purpose of correcting a long-standing "error" commonly held by European historians, Camden's work had the additional object of serving as a handbook of political edification. Few morals were pointed directly; instead, Camden followed the method of his friend the statesman Lord Burghley. Burghley, when perplexed by one of the complicated problems which faced him so continuously, made a careful listing of all that might be said for and against each side of the argument. His surviving papers are full of such memoranda, and Camden tells us that he began his work at the suggestion of Burghley, and that the latter turned his papers over to the historian.***

The annalistic method, although adopted under the influence of Tacitus, was nonetheless ideal for this kind of presentation, which differed greatly from that of the Roman. Camden's *Annals* are a compromise between a history of the time presented in what amounts to parallel columns—that is, a history of domestic affairs, of Anglo-Scottish affairs, of events in Ireland, etc.—and pure annals, such as those of Stow, which simply list events in the exact order of their occurrence, regardless of their interconnectedness. Hence, each year is a semi-independent unit, with ties

* Camden, *History*, 88-97.

** Ibid., The Authour to the Reader, blv.

*** Camden, *History*, a3r.

to its predecessors and successors. Within any given year, all events relating to France or Scotland or Ireland are put together, in each case with the relevant causes added. The result was that the budding statesman-reader could, at any point, make a mental decision, and then read on to see what decision was actually made and how it worked. Camden supplies his reader with all the pieces of the political puzzle, and then invites him to put them together. Camden does not make it easy: he supplies no easily remembered tidbits of advice, no aphorisms which oversimplified while seeming to clarify.

Inevitably, in such a scheme, fortune and divine vengeance play a negligible part. Like the *Mirror*, the *Annals* are anthropocentric, but with the connection to morality almost missing. A few exceptions do occur: an event is included because it teaches young men how to behave, another is excluded because it would only foster bad behavior.* These are exceptions, the remnants of the philosophic system of the *Mirror*; but, even here, the emphasis is on man's relation to other men. The only direct reaction to the older system is in Camden's treatment of the death of Mary of Scotland: the magnitude of the occurrence is such that God is called in.** On the other hand, all vestiges of the *Mirror's* ordered universe are not yet gone: some natural happenings are still included, some portents still hinted at. It is noteworthy, however, that the extraordinary in nature is explained in natural terms, rather than in supernatural.*** In any case, this is very far from the "lay Chronographers, that write of nothing but of Mayors and Sheriffs and the dear year, and the great Frost" of whom

* Camden, *History*, 489; 451.

** Ibid., 388.

*** Ibid., 244; 190. The latter reference is to the nova of 1572; originally, Camden included some prognostications made by Oxford astrologers, but he omitted them in the printed text: see British Museum, Cotton MS. Faustina F.i., f. 287.

Thomas Nashe so bitterly complained.[•] Pico's hierarchy is not absent, but it is very nearly in abeyance. In Camden, man is responsible for his own fate, and his misdeeds, if they recoil upon his own head, do so because of the workings of politics, not those of God. In discussing the fall of Harold and the accession of William—we turn, for a moment, to the *Britannia*—Camden gives a brief picture of the change that has occurred:

Which signal Revolution in the Kingdom, some imputed to the avarice of the Magistrates; other to the superstitious laziness of the Clergy; a third sort, to the Comet which then appeared and the influence of the stars; a fourth attributed it to God, who for hidden, but always just reasons, disposes of Kingdoms. But others, who looked into the more immediate causes, charged it upon the imprudence of King Edward, who under the specious show of religious chastity, neglected to secure a succession, and thereby made the Kingdom a prey to Ambition.^{••}

It was a dull reader who could not see which the author preferred; and it was not long before the “immediate causes” were the only ones that mattered.

Sir Robert Bruce Cotton had been a pupil of Camden at Westminster School and, joined by a common interest in antiquities, the two had become close friends. Cotton, however, was much more interested in contemporary politics and had entered Parliament as early as 1604 (at age twenty-three). While Camden had no reasons to dislike the Crown, and indeed many to feel grateful, Cotton was of the party of Sir John Eliot and the other reformers. Thus there is no surprise in discovering that the *Short View of the Long Life and Raigne of Henry the Third, King of*

• *Pierce Penilesse*, ed. G. B. Harrison (London, 1924), 59-60, quoted in L. B. Wright, *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (Ithaca, 1958), 313.

•• Camden, *Britannia*, trans. Edmund Gibson (London, 1722), I, ccxvii.

England is a party pamphlet. It is brief—less than fifty octavo pages—and pointed, and its real subject is James I rather than Henry III. In essence, it is the story of Henry's political education, and of the hard experiences that taught him. All other happenings of the reign are ruthlessly pruned away. The wisdom is carefully distilled:

Wearied with the lingering calamities of Civil Arms, and affrighted at the sudden fall of a licentious Sovereign, all men stood at gaze expecting the event of their long desires (Peace) and issue of their new hopes (Benefit). For in every shift of Princes there are few either so mean or modest that please not themselves with some probable object of preferment.*

Thus the book opens. The epigrammatic style continues throughout: the purpose of the book is to teach, and brief phrases are most easily remembered.

In Cotton, man is left entirely to his own devices. Providence and God are simply omitted. Cotton was no atheist; if asked, he would have replied that God was undoubtedly the primary cause of all human events, but that there was no point in mentioning it because the realm of the divine was so completely out of man's control. In a sense, this was a return to the ordered universe of the *Mirror*, though in Cotton God is omitted from the calculations because He may be treated as a constant factor. Whatever happens in the universe may be attributed to Him; but since man also had free will, and did not know the workings of God, it was best to concentrate on man. The attitude is very similar to that of the scientists: God as Prime Mover is simply taken for granted, and hence ignored, while the scientist studied the laws of motion. Eventually, of course, this led to a purely human view of the universe; but not in the early seventeenth century.

Nonetheless, for all practical purposes, man was the

* [Sir Robert Cotton] *A Short View of the Long Life and Raigne of Henry the Third* . . . (London, 1627), 3.

center of Cotton's universe. Nature and the supernatural are no longer included in history—these may be left to the scientists. God and Providence are in the province of theology. All that is left to history is politics and a rudimentary psychology; and the purpose of history is to teach man the latter so that he may be successful in the former:

Denials from Princes must be supplied with gracious usage, that though they cure not the sore, yet they may abate the sense of it; but best it is, that all favours come directly from themselves, denials and things of bitterness from their Ministers.*

This was a lesson that Queen Elizabeth had learned—as any careful reader of Camden might have discovered—and that James never learned.

All that remained of the older view of history was the role of fortune, and even here there was alteration: "Public motions depend on the Conduct of Fortune; private on our own carriage."•• Fortune, which might almost be blind chance, orders (or, to be precise, throws into disorder) the larger features of the political landscape; it is man's affair to wend his way past fortune's obstacles to his goal. Cotton does not use Machiavelli's metaphor of fortune as a fickle woman, but his view of the effect of fortune on politics is the same. Man is at the center of the political universe, and fortune is merely one more obstruction in his path.

History, then, remains didactic, but its lesson has changed. As with the authors of the *Mirror*, truth suffers: every event of the reign of Henry III is twisted to fit a pattern, and if even this was insufficient, the event was summarily dismissed. At one point, thirty years are disposed of in a sentence: a time of peace has no lessons to teach, at least of the kind that Cotton was interested in. In a *Short View*, history was subservient to political theory, and hence hardly

* Cotton, *Short View*, 12.

•• Cotton, *Short View*, 42.

remained history at all. Machiavelli had made a similar attempt at history-as-a-primer-for-politics in his *Castruccio Castracani*, but then abandoned it for the purely political *Prince*. Cotton never wrote a political handbook, nor did he ever succeed in combining incisive political advice with accurate history as Machiavelli had done in the *Discourses*. The *Short View* had pushed the theory of history which was based on man alone too far, with the result that its author had ceased to write history. The balance between historical truth and utility had, as with the *Mirror*, been overweighted on the side of utility; and history without truth was impossible.

In the two generations separating the *Mirror* and the *Short View*, the historian's concept of the purpose of history changed because his concept of the relation of man to God, and to the universe, changed. One of the reasons for the alteration was the inescapable un-co-operativeness



Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586). Engraving after the portrait by Antonio Moro. (*Bettmann Archive.*)

of historical fact; but this is a problem for any theory of the utility of history, and Cotton ended by having fully as much difficulty with it as Baldwin and his associates. While Sir Philip Sidney's remarks indicate that this reason must not be underestimated, it is still too general and wide-reaching in its application to offer more than a partial solution for the problem of why the evident change in historical interpretation occurred.

Essentially, the doctrine that lay behind the *Mirror* was Catholic, and after 1558 England ceased to be a Catholic nation. Though the Church of England was not entirely Lutheran, nor Calvinist, but a mixture of these with Catholicism, the dissolution of the monasteries and of the chantries had dealt a blow at the doctrine of works. Furthermore, in the latter half of the sixteenth century, Calvinism became more and more powerful. The doctrine of the elect meant that, as far as salvation was concerned, the drama was



Francis Bacon (1561-1626). (David Eugene Smith Collection, Columbia University.)

already played out; difficult as that must have been to accept, the concept of complete predestination must have been more difficult yet. Given an incomplete belief in predestination, taken together with the belief that the elect had already been chosen, the inevitable result was that man would take a greater interest in his activities on this earth. On the one hand, the average citizen, not knowing whether he was among the chosen or not, would concentrate on his day-to-day activities; on the other, the convinced Calvinist, certain of his election, tried to show his certainty by achieving success. There is no reason to limit this to the realm of business; it might apply equally well to the sphere of politics. If, from the religious point of view, man was closer to God than he had been, from that of daily life, God was much more remote. It is this attitude that is evident in Cotton: on the level of first causes, all has been decided, and only the secondary causes remained. As a theoretical philosophy this is somewhat inconsistent; it had, however, the virtue of seeming to work.

It ought to have been possible to write history from a purely Calvinist point of view. Such a history would have as its purpose the elucidation of the way in which God works on earth, but it would have little to offer man. Rules of behavior would be irrelevant, political maxims would have been beside the point. It is possible that Raleigh, in his *History of the World*, tried it, though Raleigh, as a practical politician, found it difficult to limit himself entirely to God's workings. In any case, it is possible to interpret his work in this manner, and it is this fact that accounts for its popularity with the Puritans later in the seventeenth century. But Raleigh's attempt at Calvinist history—if it is that—stood alone. Raleigh was the only writer who tried to keep the old unities, and hence his work is more reminiscent of the *Mirror* than any of the other seventeenth-century histories.

For most writers, the old unities—among man, nature,

and God—were gone. Most of them would have agreed with Donne, when he said:

... but yet confess, in this
The world's proportion disfigured is;
That those two legs whereon it doth rely,
Reward and punishment, are bent awry.
And, Oh, it can no more be questioned,
That beauty's best, proportion, is dead, . . .*

This, of course, is Sidney's point, carried to a higher level. With the death, at the hand of Protestantism, of the old system of reward and punishment, the old *quid pro quo* between man and God disappears, and the way is left open for the exaggerations of Cotton.

At the same time, a new purpose for history arose from the defenders of Protestantism. Luther and Calvin had claimed to represent an older form of Christianity, a Christianity freed from the un-Scriptural additions of Catholicism. In England, Archbishop Parker, influenced by the Protestant historian Matthias Flacius Illyricus' dictum *Historia est fundamentum doctrinae*, had revived Anglo-Saxon studies in order to show that the English church resembled the pure church of long ago.** The result was a history that did not moralize, but instead set out to prove a point. The emphasis was not, of course, on man, but on the continuity of doctrine; the example could, however, easily be perverted. Camden's *Annals* secularize Parker's idea: his history is written to prove that Elizabeth was fundamentally innocent of shedding Catholic blood, and, more

* John Donne, "The First Anniversary: An Anatomie of the World," in *The Complete Poetry and Selected Prose of John Donne* . . . (New York, 1941), 173-4; the poem is discussed in a similar context in Wylie Sypher, *Four Stages of Renaissance Style* (New York, 1956), 101.

** Eleanor N. Adams, *Old English Scholarship in England from 1566-1800* (New Haven, 1917), ch. I.

broadly, that the Elizabethan Settlement was, politically, a blessing for England. In Cotton, the only purpose is to show, historically, that man must work out his own destiny, and the *Short View* tries to help him in doing so.

New techniques of historical investigation also played their parts. All the historians claimed truth as a primary purpose, but the ways in which the truth might be established developed during the course of the sixteenth century. The authors of the *Mirror* had taken the easiest way: if the sources disagree, rely on Hall or on convenience. But this was outdated even in 1559. Earlier in the century, Polydore Vergil had applied the criterion of common sense when he investigated the Brutus legend. His opponent, John Leland, had gone a step further, by insisting on documentation. Somewhat surprisingly, it was Vergil who had been right and Leland wrong in that controversy, but the basic point, that facts are best determined from an investigation into sources, had been made. Later in the century, Camden and Ralph Brooke had argued over the genealogy of English families: the result was, again, to establish the supremacy of documentary proof.[•] By the beginning of the seventeenth century, Camden's pupil, Augustine Vincent, could attack Brooke anew by asking "If he have such Records, why doth he not produce them in their turns? Why doth he not lay them down upon the Margin?" and the charge was unanswerable; and John Selden, in his preface to the same book, insisted that it was necessary to use manuscript sources as well as published ones.^{••} Camden had done just that in his *Annals*, and even Cotton felt obliged to lay his sources "down upon the Margin." Inevitably, as the material available for determining his-

• T. D. Kendrick, *British Antiquity* (London, 1950), 41-2, 79-84, on Vergil; Leland is discussed throughout; the debate between Camden and Brooke is discussed, 151-6.

•• Augustine Vincent, *A Discoverie of Errours...* (London, 1622), "To Raphe Brooke, Yorke Herald" and "To my singular good Friend, Mr. Augustine Vincent."

torical truth increased, the play between truth and utility was lessened, and the pressures upon the author of history-with-a-purpose increased correspondingly.

The revival of the classics which bulks so large on the Elizabethan literary scene also had an influence on the historians. At the very beginning of the sixteenth century, Sir Thomas More had written his life of Richard III under the tutelage of Suetonius, and had thus given even his fragmentary history more unity than could be found in the work of his predecessors. Suetonius was not to be the greatest force operating in favor of the newer history: his influence on form would remain, and it is as well that no one tried to reproduce his content. The historian who was to be the guide for Bacon and Camden and the rest was Tacitus. Sir John Hayward, accused of treason for writing the history of Henry IV with a moral rather too pointed, was saved when Bacon pointed out that the proper charge was not treason but larceny: from Tacitus.* Of Bacon himself, F. P. Wilson writes:

Yet if in this work [*Henry VII*] he shows no wish to imitate the style of Tacitus, he also shows that his admiration for Tacitus as moralist and historian has not diminished with the years. (Much of Tacitus he could and did absorb through Machiavelli and Lipsius, but he goes also to the fountain-head.) The times he chose to depict were not sombre and repulsive like those of his master, nor was Bacon by temperament a pessimist; but in his reflections on political expediency, in the skill with which he analyses the hidden motives of his characters, in the flashes of irony which light up from time to time the gravity of his narrative, we see where he had put himself to school. "Vivas morum observationes spirat" is his splendid tribute to Tacitus: "he utters the very morals of life itself." When we consider how repeatedly Clarendon, too, turns to the same source for guidance and inspiration, may we not say that it was under the auspices of Tacitus that English history became adult?••

• Hayward is discussed by Lily B. Campbell, "The Use of Historical Patterns in the Reign of Elizabeth," *Huntington Library Quarterly* I, no. 2 (Jan. 1938), 158-64.

•• F. P. Wilson, *Elizabethan and Jacobean* (Oxford, 1945), 37.

What was true of Bacon was also true of Camden, who himself tells us how much he owed to the Roman; and by extension the same could be said of Cotton. The English historians were not the first to be influenced; much earlier, Machiavelli and Guicciardini had taken a Tacitean approach to the past, and the work of the Florentines was well known in England. Tacitus and the two Italians supplied a model for the English, a model more readily adopted because of the other, earlier, changes in the historian's attitude toward his subject. Unquestionably, the reasons why the Florentines had taken to Tacitean history differed from those of the English when they turned to the same source; the results were, however, the same.*

One final reason for the shift toward the new history is found in the altered character of the men writing it. Baldwin and his associates had been literary men; Speed and Stow were both London tailors, Grafton a grocer. Camden, on the other hand, was a schoolteacher and professional scholar with friends in high places; Bacon himself occupied the heights; Cotton was a member of an old county family, very distantly related to the King; Selden and Spelman were lawyers. History's practitioners had advanced on the social scale; the new historians were men of more leisure and of wider culture. Since they wrote for scholars primarily, and for a wider audience only secondarily, there was no need to make compromises for the sake of readers. Stow had had to break his completed history of England up into annals at the order of his printer; no such necessity would ever face Bacon and Camden and the rest.

History, as the writers of the early seventeenth century practiced it, still bore some resemblances to history as conceived by the authors of the *Mirror*. No one disputed that history had to have a purpose, whether moral or political, though the seventeenth-century heirs of Archbishop Parker were to produce works whose only purpose was to elucidate

* Leonard F. Dean, "Sir Francis Bacon's Theory of Civil History-Writing," *English Literary History* VIII, no. 3 (Sept. 1941), 161-83.

a precedent. There is never a suggestion, however, that history should be written for its own sake; indeed, as Professor Douglas has shown, the search for pure truth had a deleterious effect:

Historical scholarship has never, at its best, been able to neglect problems relating to "God and the soul," and there was a more vital danger that the new scepticism might shrivel the very motives which had prompted the scholars to their important achievement. The rejection of scholasticism, the development of the Baconian method, and the growth of experimental science, fostered a habit of mind which sharply distinguished between a "fact" and a metaphysical truth, and this distinction cut at the root of that connection between historical and ethical inquiry which in the past had provided the main stimulus to historical research, and which after the Restoration continued to do so. When this was weakened, medieval scholarship was itself, as a consequence, for a considerable time, to languish.*

Nor did this kind of history necessarily produce inaccuracy. A historian without facts was rapidly put out of court; the debate, when there was one, was between varying interpretations, each of which was bolstered with an imposing array of citations.

The increase in documentation was to be one of the legacies of the new historians. The view that the nature of man never changes, and hence that the human causes of history also were forever the same, remained unchallenged until the present century, even if the eighteenth-century conception of man as a *tabula rasa* was to cause some alterations in it. But, in a sense, the most important contribution of the new history was its emphasis on man. Providence and fortune could no longer be invoked when the historian was unable to find better causes for historical happenings; and when, in the twentieth century, other forms of determinism are adduced as the wellsprings of history, new

* David Douglas, *English Scholars, 1660-1730*, 2nd ed. (London, 1951), 27.

heirs of the seventeenth-century historians arise to resist them.

The story of the historiography of the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages is the story of a revolution in historical thinking; as such, however, it is not isolated, but a part of the greater story of the exchange of one universal philosophy for another. In turn, the *Mirror*, Camden, and Cotton are mere representatives; Stow and Speed, Bacon, and Hayward would have served as well. The greater revolution led eventually to the rise of science as well as to a great age of historical writing; in politics, it led to the rebellions of 1640 and of 1688; and, as many writers have shown, these events are interrelated, and history played its part in the realm of politics as well.*

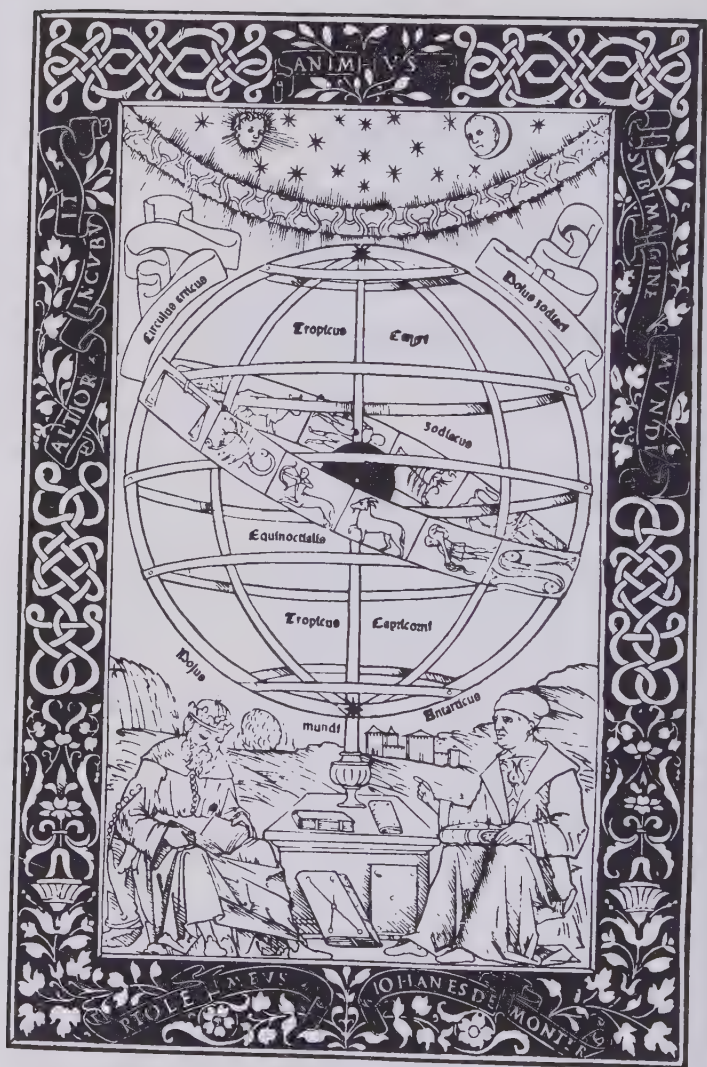
* Matthew A. Fitzsimons, "Politics and Men of Learning in England, 1540-1640," *Review of Politics* VI, no. 4 (Oct. 1944), 452-83; Philip Styles, "Politics and Historical Research in the Early Seventeenth Century," *English Historical Scholarship in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (London, 1956), 49-72; E. Evans, "Of the Antiquity of Parliaments in England: Some Elizabethan and Early Stuart Opinions," *History* XXIII (1938), 206-21.

Greek Astronomy and Modern Science: The Universe as Illusion

C. Warren Hollister

Much has been written in recent years on the subject of a philosophy of science. Some of our wisest and most articulate scholars have been engaged in a profound controversy as to the kind of knowledge scientists are giving to mankind. Is modern science unveiling the innermost secrets of the universe, or is it merely providing us with ingenious methods of predicting occurrences whose basic nature and fundamental meaning lie far beyond our understanding? Are scientists probing the reality of the cosmos or merely analyzing and cataloguing its surface effects? Indeed, does the term "reality" have any meaning at all for us?

To the historian of science, this issue is by no means a new one. Indeed, the astronomers of Greek antiquity were beset with a skepticism as to the reality of scientific knowledge which has much in common with the attitude of many contemporary minds. This radical skepticism characterized much of the best scientific thought from the age of the Greeks to the age of Copernicus. But since about the middle of the sixteenth century, the tide of scientific skepticism



Medieval frontispiece to the Epitome of Ptolemy's *Almagest*.

has been receding in the face of a newer conviction that science is the master key to ultimate reality. This conviction was nourished by the magnificent achievements of Copernicus and Kepler, Galileo and Newton, and their many illustrious successors. Gradually, doubt was superseded by faith.

This scientific faith which has characterized the intellectual achievements of the last several centuries is presently under attack, and many contemporary scientists are now drifting toward a point of view strangely similar to that of the ancient Greeks. Today the two concepts exist side by side as two concurrent but somewhat discordant aspects of the modern scientific mind. Their past history is long and intriguing. What follows here is merely a brief sketch of a complex and fascinating story.

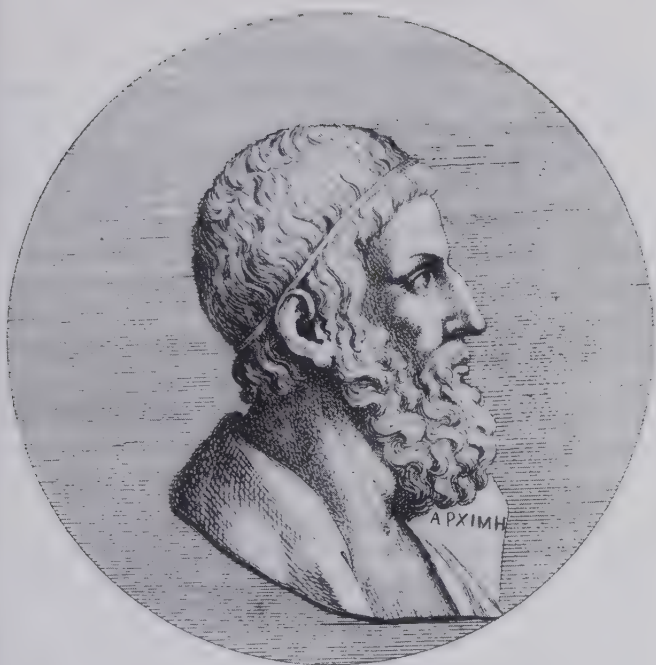
The astronomers of antiquity were an ingenious and sophisticated group of men. They produced several alternative hypotheses capable of explaining planetary motion with a fair degree of accuracy. They calculated the relative distances of the sun and moon with poor results but a sound method. They determined the circumference of the earth with remarkable precision, produced accurate planetary tables and star charts, and discovered the precession of the equinoxes. But despite these significant achievements, most of the Greek astronomers approached their work much as we might undertake to solve a chess problem. Not only did they lack confidence in the reality of their theories; some of them doubted that the physical universe existed at all. To such men as these, the material world was merely an illusion disguising a cosmos of immaterial forms, a moral or spiritual universe, or a world of phantoms. It is not difficult to understand how these views might engender an attitude of skepticism toward the objective validity of astronomical systems.

An excellent example of this synthesis between brilliant achievement and profound skepticism may be found in the illustrious Greek astronomer of the third century B.C.,

Aristarchus of Samos. As far as we know, Aristarchus was the first person in history to suggest that the earth revolved around the sun. He was also one of the very first to contend that the earth rotates daily on its axis. Our knowledge of Aristarchus' radical theories is indirect, since his own treatise on the heliocentric universe has been lost. But there can be little doubt that such a treatise once existed, for Aristarchus' views are reported to us by several other scholars of antiquity whose integrity is beyond question. One of these scholars is Archimedes, a younger contemporary of Aristarchus, who writes: "Aristarchus brought out a treatise consisting of certain hypotheses wherein it appears . . . that the earth revolves about the sun on the circumference of a circle with the sun lying in the center of the orbit. . . ."

The testimony of Archimedes is confirmed by Plutarch: "Aristarchus of Samos . . . in order to save the appearances supposed that the heavens stand still and that the earth moves in an oblique circle at the same time as it turns on its axis."

These accounts make it abundantly clear that Aristarchus proposed a heliocentric system, but they also disclose that his theory was hypothetical or, as Plutarch puts it, a supposition intended merely to "save the appearances." One regrets that the hypothesis was not accepted by Aristarchus' successors. It was rejected on the grounds of absurdity, impiety, and inaccuracy. This last criticism was perfectly just, for the theory rested on the mistaken assumption that the planets revolve at constant speeds on circular orbits whereas, as Kepler was to demonstrate eighteen hundred years later, they actually revolve at varying speeds on elliptical orbits. So as a result of Aristarchus' error of uniform circular motion, his hypothesis was rather inexact in its predictions, and suffered by comparison with the infinitely more complex geocentric systems which were later developed by Hipparchus and Ptolemy. But it is significant that no record exists of anyone objecting to Aristarchus' hypothesis



Archimedes (287?-212 B.C.). (*David Eugene Smith Collection, Columbia University.*)

on physical grounds. It would have been easy to demonstrate that heliocentric astronomy was contradicted by Aristotelian physics. Aristotle had taught that the earth was composed of coarse, heavy, "imperfect" material whose natural property was to fall to the center of the universe, while the heavens were light and ethereal. Aristotle's physics was widely accepted in antiquity, and yet was never used as a weapon against the notions of Aristarchus. The reason is that Aristotle's world was real while that of Aristarchus was imaginary. Aristotle was undertaking to describe the actual universe while Aristarchus was merely saving the appearances. Their concepts had nothing in

common with one another, and could therefore never intersect or collide.

Nearly every notable astronomer in antiquity shared Aristarchus' view that the purpose of astronomy is to create systems by which observations might be correlated and predictions made. A commentator of the sixth century A.D. alludes to a group of scientists, "among whom were Herac-
lides of Pontus and Aristarchus, who believed they could save the appearances by making the heavens and the stars immovable but making the earth turn eastward on its axis. . . ."

One of the most extreme examples of this skepticism is found in the work of Hipparchus, perhaps the ablest astronomer of the ancient world. He set about to describe in exact terms the motions of the sun and moon. In order to account for the observed irregularities in their paths across the heavens, he proposed two alternative solutions. One of them was based on the assumption that the sun and moon revolved on epicycles—small circles whose centers were affixed to larger circles concentric with the earth. By adjusting the sizes and speeds of the epicycles and the larger circles (called deferents), he was able to account for the observed motions with relative precision. Hipparchus' other proposal involved what he called the eccentric—a large circle on which the sun or moon revolved around the earth. The earth was placed within the eccentric but not at the center of it. By adjusting the distance between the earth and the center of the eccentric, Hipparchus could predict solar and lunar positions in the heavens with the same accuracy that he achieved with his epicycle system.

Hipparchus made it clear that the motion of the sun and moon could be described with equal precision by either theory. He regarded the epicycle theory as the more elegant of the two, but, as a later commentator reported, he did not pretend to know "which motions of the wandering stars were in accordance with nature and were true, and

which motions they performed by accident and merely apparently....”

Ptolemy, the last in an illustrious line of Greek astronomers, was no less skeptical than his predecessors. Indeed, he begins most of his explanations with the phrase “let us imagine...,” and declares elsewhere, “I do not claim to be able to account for all the motions at the same time, but I will show that each one, individually, is well explained by its proper theory.” The geocentric system which Ptolemy worked out in such enormous detail in his *Almagest* combined the use of eccentrics and epicycles to produce a world-system which accounted for solar, lunar, and planetary motion with remarkable precision. It was far more accurate than the heliocentric theory of Aristarchus, which was, after all, more a simple suggestion than an elaborate system.



Ptolemy (Claudius Ptolemaeus). Medieval engraving. (David Eugene Smith Collection, Columbia University.)

Yet the two men, Ptolemy and Aristarchus, had much in common. Each was seeking in his own way to save the appearances, and neither professed to describe the real cosmos.

The philosophical assumptions of the Greek astronomers are admirably summarized by Geminus, a scholar who lived in the century prior to Christ: "Why do the sun, moon, and planets appear to move irregularly? Because when we assume that their circles are eccentric or that the astronomical objects move on an epicycle, the apparent irregularity can be accounted for, and it is necessary to find out in how many ways the appearances can be represented so that the theory of the planets can be made to agree with physical causation in a possible manner. Thus, Heraclides of Pontus arose and said that the irregularity observed relative to the sun could also be accounted for if the earth moved in a certain way and the sun stood still in a certain way. In general, it is not the astronomer's business to see what is immovable by nature and what is movable, but formulating hypotheses as to some things being in motion and others stationary, he considers which hypotheses conform to the phenomena in the heavens."

In this passage, Geminus epitomizes the basic premise of ancient astronomy in clear and unmistakable terms. Within the limitations which the Greeks imposed upon their astronomical speculation, there was opportunity for much ingenious theorizing, but beyond those limitations few astronomers dared venture.

Ptolemy died toward the end of the second century A.D. Already, the evolution of the Roman Empire was far advanced. In the decades and centuries that followed, Rome was torn by civil anarchy and economic paralysis and ultimately collapsed before the onslaught of the Huns and the Germans. In these terrible days, science was reduced to its barest essentials. When great men had the leisure for speculation, they became moral philosophers or theologians rather

than physicists or astronomers. Men like Augustine and Boethius were not interested in epicycles. The system of Ptolemy was lost or forgotten, and by the sixth century A.D., scholars were insisting once again that the earth was flat and the heavens, a great vaulted tabernacle. Astronomers ceased to speculate over world-systems. Their one concern was now in calculating the correct date of Easter.

In time science returned to the West. The concepts of Ptolemy, which had been preserved through the Dark Ages by the Arabs, began to filter back into Europe again in the twelfth century. Within another hundred years, Western scholars were discussing epicycles and eccentrics with some assurance. But as the Ptolemaic system returned, there came with it the notion, fundamental to Greek science, that the astronomical universe is a universe of illusion, and that the astronomer's role is merely to save the appearances of a reality forever mysterious and unknown.

Medieval scholars did not doubt that the earth really was in the center of the universe. But they believed in the central position of the earth for non-astronomical reasons. It would have seemed incredible to them that the great drama of salvation in which they believed so deeply could unfold on a stage remote from the center of the universe. The crucifixion could not have occurred, it seemed to them, on some out-of-the-way planet.

So the geocentric idea was accepted unquestioningly, but the complex mechanism of the Ptolemaic system was regarded merely as a convenient tool. Why should one speculate as to the actual existence of epicycles in a spiritual universe dominated by God and his angels and by the struggle with evil? Indeed, some scholars neglected even to save the appearances. St. Bonaventure, one of medieval Europe's greatest intellects, insisted that God guided his planets in perfect circles around the earth and that the irregular motion of the planets among the stars was therefore a mirage.

Evidently, St. Bonaventure earned his distinguished reputation elsewhere than in the field of science. But the High Middle Ages did produce a group of scholars who devoted much of their energy to scientific investigation. In the view of some historians, it is among these medieval scientists—such men as Robert Grosseteste, Roger Bacon, Nicholas Oresme, and William of Ockham—that modern scientific methodology began. These early investigators sought to base their theories on observation and to verify them by experiment. Whenever possible, they applied the tool of mathematics. But their basic presupposition was still that of the Greeks. As Dr. A. C. Crombie makes clear in his excellent book on Robert Grosseteste, the scientists of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, like those of antiquity, regarded their theories as methods of correlating phenomena without regard to any underlying reality. “If one thing were demonstrated from many and another thing from fewer equally known premises,” Grosseteste writes, “clearly that is better which is from fewer because it makes us know more quickly. . . .” Likewise, Nicholas Oresme defends his notion of the diurnal rotation of the earth by pointing out that “all the effects which we see can be made and all appearances saved” by substituting for the rotation of the celestial sphere, “one little operation, that is, the daily movement of the earth. . . .”

The new age began with Copernicus. The ideas of this Dominican monk of the sixteenth century have often been termed “the Copernican revolution.” But there were, properly speaking, two Copernican revolutions rather than one. The more famous of the two was a revival and elaboration of the heliocentric theory of Aristarchus. Copernicus retained the old, erroneous notion of uniform, circular motion, but he fashioned a system far more accurate than that of Aristarchus by adding Ptolemaic epicycles and eccentrics. Still, the heliocentric system required fewer circles than the geocentric, and Copernicus was able to

construct a simpler, less cluttered universe than that of Ptolemy. It was, in fact, the first world-system sufficiently accurate to rival the Ptolemaic hypothesis. Yet Copernicus



Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543). (*David Eugene Smith Collection, Columbia University.*)

borrowed heavily from both Ptolemy and Aristarchus, and was far from effecting a complete break with the past.

If this had been the extent of Copernicus' innovation, the tremendous political and religious reaction against heliocentric astronomy would doubtless never have occurred. But

Copernicus presented to the world an even more radical notion than the heliocentric theory. It was his belief that the role of the astronomer was nothing less than the investigation of reality itself. The heliocentric universe was not merely an illusion; it was a fact!

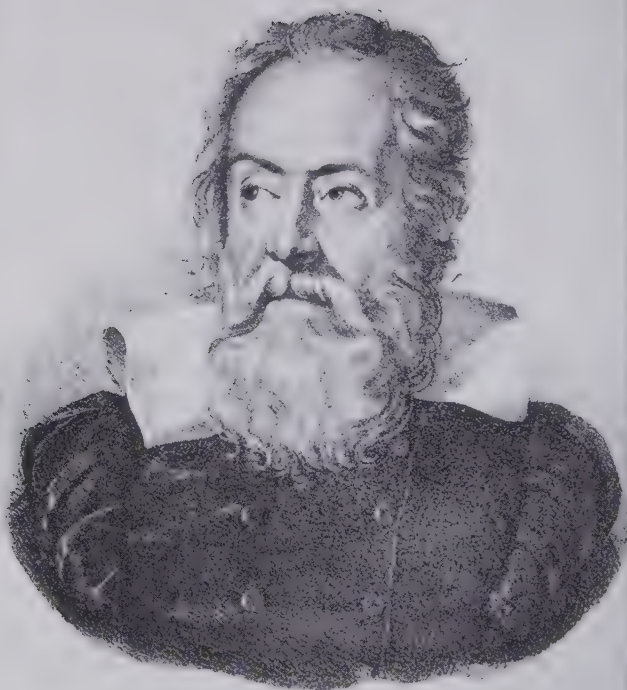
This second Copernican revolution was therefore an act of faith: faith in the essential identity between scientific systems and the actual construction of the universe—faith in the ability of the human mind to fathom and encompass the cosmos. And so, from the time of Copernicus onward, we hear less and less about saving the appearances, more and more about what the physical universe is really like. For to this new breed of scientists, the physical world was no less real than the world of the spirit. In this new conception of the nature of scientific knowledge lies the real radicalism of Copernicus. As Galileo expressed it, the Ptolemaic universe “satisfied an Astronomer merely arithmetical, yet it did not afford satisfaction or content to the Astronomer Philosophical,” whereas Copernicus “very well understood that if one might save the celestial appearances with false assumptions in Nature, it might with much more ease be done with true suppositions.”

The impact of the second Copernican revolution was delayed for about half a century after the publication of *De Revolutionibus* in 1543. Copernicus' scientific faith was masked, in the first edition of his work, by a preface written by a well-intentioned but somewhat obtuse Lutheran pastor, Andrew Osiander. The preface described the Copernican system as a mere alternative to the geocentric universe of Ptolemy. It was presented simply as another device to make predictions and save appearances. Copernicus was dying as his book was being published and therefore had no opportunity to correct the misleading preface. Previously, he had refused expressly to present his views as merely a method of correlating observations, and after his death his friends objected violently to Osiander's insertion. But perhaps the preface served a purpose after all. Unquestionably it softened

or at least postponed the explosive reaction to the Copernican system, and in the meantime the heliocentric idea spread without serious opposition.

The reaction could not, however, be postponed indefinitely. The preface was quite out of harmony with the remainder of the work and with Copernicus' own statements on the subject. By the early seventeenth century, the educated world realized that the Copernican system was intended as a real universe with the sun at its center around which the planet earth actually revolved. As such, the theory seemed dangerous and subversive. It was subjected to far more searching criticism than had ever been levied against the system of Aristarchus. On the one hand, the old theological arguments in favor of the geocentric universe were revived. The churches and states of the seventeenth century were unanimous in their condemnation. The idea was preposterous, heretical, and positively blasphemous. On this fact Catholics and Protestants could agree. The advocates of the new astronomy were urged repeatedly to abjure, or at least to present, their theory as a system for predictions and nothing more. Not only did the notion seem to lessen the significance of the Incarnation; it also appeared to reduce the kings of Europe to Lilliputian size. Thus, Copernican books were banned and Copernican scientists persecuted.

On the other hand, since the system was presented as a true description of the universe, it was attacked on physical grounds as well. Opponents argued that the diurnal rotation of the earth would split it to pieces. If the earth moved, then a weight dropped from a tower would be deflected to the side. Indeed, it seemed doubtful that the tower itself could remain standing, for the fierce winds caused by the earth's motion would doubtless blow it down. Finally, the annual revolution about the sun would cause the stars to undergo systematic radical displacements which were, in fact, not observed. This last argument was particularly effective. Not until considerably later was it realized that



Galileo Galilei (1564-1642). (*David Eugene Smith Collection, Columbia University.*)

the stars were far more distant than most scientists had previously imagined, and that consequently the annual shifts in stellar position would be incredibly small. Today these shifts are observed regularly, and represent our most direct means of determining stellar distances. But at the beginning of the seventeenth century these facts were unknown, and many scientists, including the distinguished astronomer Tycho Brahe, rejected the Copernican system on purely scientific grounds.

Nevertheless, both of the Copernican revolutions ultimately won out. Most of the great scientists in the

generation after Copernicus, men like Kepler and Galileo, were apostles of the new faith. They refused to deal with appearances only, but turned their attention to the understanding of the cosmos. The philosopher Thomas Hobbes pushed the new idea still further by accepting the physical universe as the only reality and denying existence to the world of the spirit—a complete reversal of the medieval outlook. Most of the new scientists, however, believed in the reality of both worlds, and did not feel that in investigating physical astronomy they were rejecting the reality of the moral and religious realms.

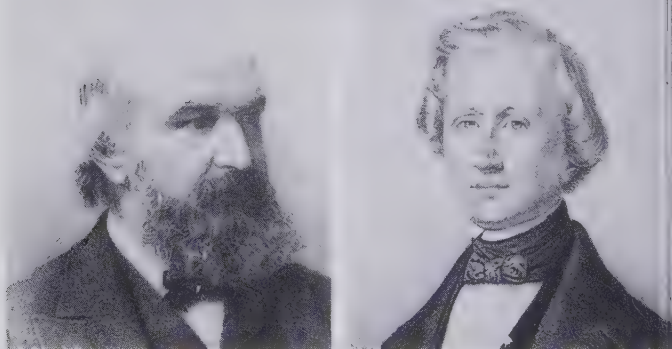
The extent of the scientific faith displayed by Copernicus and his immediate followers was remarkable indeed, for



Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727). (*David Eugene Smith Collection, Columbia University.*)

they accepted the actual existence of a rather complex system of epicycles. The new universe did not actually become a believable world until the publication of Kepler's first two laws in 1609, denying the old concept of uniform circular motion. By means of the ellipse law and the law of equal areas, the epicycles could be abolished at last, and planetary motion could be described and understood according to a system unprecedented in its accuracy and startling in its simplicity. The planets could now be regarded as moving in elliptical paths around the sun at speeds which varied in relation to their distance from the sun at various points on their orbits.

The publication of Newton's laws of motion and of universal gravitation in 1687 provided the new astronomy with a comprehensive physical basis. Newton's successors believed that the fundamental mysteries of the physical universe had now been explained, and that it only remained to work out the details. One eighteenth-century scientist lamented that no important issues were left to be resolved, for Newton had already discovered the basic system of the world. The identity between Newtonian mechanics and the real universe



John Couch Adams (1819-1892) and Urbain Jean Joseph Leverrier (1811-1877), discoverers—independently of each other—of the planet Neptune. (*David Eugene Smith Collection, Columbia University.*)

was unquestioned. The cosmos was now regarded as a great machine, exorcized of divine whim, logical, orderly, and subject to exact laws.

For about two centuries after the publication of Newton's *Principia* in 1687, the scientific faith continued undiminished. Astronomers and mathematicians elaborated the Newtonian world-machine but did not alter its fundamentals. The discovery of Neptune by Adams and Leverrier in 1846 through the application of Newton's law of gravity to the irregularities in the motion of Uranus was regarded as a spectacular triumph of the new physics. The sublime confidence in the objective validity of scientific theory was questioned only by a few philosophers. To most of the world, science was a synonym for omniscience.

In our own day, many educated people accept without question this scientific faith which proceeded from the second Copernican revolution. The contemporary historian Alexandre Koyré looks back unsympathetically upon the skepticism of the ancient and medieval scientists: "Positivism [i.e., skepticism] is a child of failure and renunciation. Its birthplace is Greek astronomy and its best expression is in the Ptolemaic system. . . . [Its supporters] restricted their aim to saving phenomena, that is, to the purely formal handling of observational data, a procedure that enabled them to make valid predictions, but which was paid for by the acceptance of a final divorce between mathematical theory and underlying reality." (*Diogenes*, No. 16, p. 17.) Koyré evidently objects to this divorce between mathematical theory and reality, but some contemporary scientists would question his judgment. There is presently a growing doubt that the two concepts should ever have been wed, and a feeling that divorce might well be beneficial on the grounds of incompatibility.

These doubts are symptoms of a decline in the ardent scientific faith of our forefathers. Perhaps the greatest heretics are to be found in the field of theoretical physics.

Copernicus and Galileo would certainly have looked askance at the modern physicist who claims to use the quantum theory of light on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and the wave theory on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Indeed, we are reminded of Hipparchus with his alternative theories of epicycles and eccentrics. But contemporary physicists maintain that their two theories of light are both valuable and that it would be folly to abandon one of them merely for the sake of an imagined consistency. Each is useful in its own area to make valid predictions, even though the actual nature of light remains something of a mystery.

The behavior of sub-atomic particles presents a similar paradox. Physicists have found that it is impossible to describe concurrently both the velocity and the position of individual electrons. But rather than speculate fruitlessly as to the true nature of the elusive electron, physicists have devised formulas to account for the behavior of electrons in large numbers, by means of which exact predictions can be made.

Albert Einstein was a scientist of the older school. He objected to modern quantum mechanics as a repudiation of the faith in a real universe operating on the principles of scientific causation. This faith lay behind his revolutionary theories of relativity and his attempts to formulate a unified field theory. He was, however, unable to solve many of the paradoxes of contemporary physics or to arrest the growing divergence between scientific theory and reality. The old Copernican faith continues to decay.

Today, an increasing number of scientists and philosophers regard the entire body of scientific knowledge with profound skepticism. It is coming more and more to be viewed as an immense labyrinth of ratios—a complex maze of equations which enable us to predict but not to understand. There is the haunting feeling that matter may not actually exist as an entity—that the real cosmos may for-

ever elude our superficial efforts to comprehend it through observation and measurement.

But science must go on, even though the scientist may be obliged to re-evaluate his mission. If he cannot unveil reality or discover truth, he can, at least, predict subsequent phenomena on the basis of prior data. He can, in short, save the appearances.

The return to this concept of antiquity is still far from complete. Many scientists remain apostles of the old faith of Copernicus, particularly in areas of investigation that are less beset with paradox than theoretical physics. Conceivably, the later twentieth century might bring more acceptable and realistic explanations of the behavior of matter and a concomitant revival of the faith. In the meantime, it can only be observed that a rejection of the second Copernican revolution need not imply a decline in science itself. On the contrary, we may be wiser than our predecessors in our awareness of its limitations. Our present skepticism toward the reality of scientific hypotheses is not accompanied by any doubt as to the usefulness of scientific methodology. Nor do many scientists entertain uncertainties as to the actual existence of a physical cosmos. But they are beginning to suspect that the universe, like a great Sphinx, will withhold her secrets forever from the persistent but futile scrutiny of our pigmy minds.



Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677). Oil portrait (1670) by Samuel van Hoogstraeten. (*Bettmann Archive.*)

Freedom of Speech in Seventeenth-Century Thought

Leonard W. Levy

Belief in the existence of witches, the flatness of the earth, and the divine right of kings are among the fighting faiths that have been discarded in the free exchange of ideas. The thick integuments of ignorance and prejudice are sometimes penetrated by the titanic blows of the moralist, sometimes by the detached empiricism of the scientist. But the indispensable condition of progress has always been intellectual liberty. We owe our philosophy of intellectual liberty to the seventeenth century—to Milton, Spinoza, and Locke above all. They taught us that even the best-warranted beliefs must be continuously tested in the crucible of criticism to determine their continuing validity. They taught us too that reliance upon authority is a poor test of truth. A proposition should not be accepted because Milton advanced it, but because he was right—if indeed he was right. On some major libertarian issues, he and his fellow philosophers of the seventeenth century were not “right.” Although the thrust of their thinking supports an ever-broadening principle of intellectual freedom, we should

recognize that much that passed for wisdom in their time may very well have passed out of date. Their position was neither the most libertarian nor their insights the most believed that the established order could be criminally in the realm of political and religious expression. For they believed that the established order could be criminally assaulted by mere opinions, words and words alone, as contrasted with deeds. Present-day libertarians should therefore understand that romanticized images of Milton or ritualized endorsements of Locke—or, for that matter, of Jefferson and John Stuart Mill—may boomerang. More important, they should realize that there is a continuing need to revitalize and expand the philosophy of freedom of political discussion. As an initial step in this direction, the noxious encumbrances that have been inherited from the seventeenth century's most libertarian spokesmen must be discarded, like the belief in witchcraft, as a product of antiquated prejudice, understandable in its time, perhaps, but never valid.

Historians of libertarian theory have, in Mrs. Malaprop's phrase, too often "anticipated the past." They have succumbed to an impulse to recreate it so that it will yield a message that instructs the present and supports an authoritative and progressively unfolding tradition of freedom. It is comforting, of course, to have the past's wisest philosophies coincide with modern libertarian convictions that we know to be right. But it is precarious to rest those convictions on a narrow historicism, particularly if the "history" is not well founded. A case in point is the usual stress on the intentions of the framers of the First Amendment to abolish the common law of seditious libel and to give the utmost protection to freedom of speech and press. A related way to fortify the argument from the past is to parade the grandiloquent utterances of the theorists of intellectual liberty—Milton, Spinoza, and Locke among

others. But one's convictions should not be based on convention; moreover, there is a very real possibility that the convention—a reliance on seventeenth-century libertarians—has frailties that too often are glossed over.

Freedom of speech had very little history as a concept, or a practice, prior to the First Amendment. The phrase itself until the last quarter of the eighteenth century referred both in England and America primarily to a parliamentary, not a civil, right. It signified, in the main, the legislator's immunity from punishment for anything said by him in his official capacity during a legislative session, rather than the citizen's personal right to speak his mind. The phrase originated in Anglo-American history in the struggle of Parliament to achieve the privilege of free debate. It did not imply the right of the citizen to broadcast seditious libel.

Freedom of speech could not become a civil liberty until the truth of men's opinions, especially their religious and political opinions, was regarded as relative rather than absolute; until kings and parliaments were sufficiently strong and stable to be able to ignore political criticism; and until the people were considered the source of sovereignty, the masters rather than the servants of the government. There could be no toleration of dissent when Catholics, Anglicans, and Puritans were profoundly convinced that the precise shade of belief which each respectively professed must be established as England's only true religion and that all be compelled to accept it for their own salvation as well as for the good of God and of the English nation. Whether the government was Catholic or Protestant, Anglican or Puritan, the compulsion of conscience for the sake of uniformity necessitated restraints upon freedom of expression. Moreover, the Reformation, by making the monarch the head of the established church, had converted every religious question into a political one and suffused government policies with religious overtones. As a result,

heresy and nonconformity became virtually indistinguishable from sedition and treason. Criticism of the Church affected the State, and vice versa. The danger ascribed to wrong opinions was particularly great for several centuries after the emergence of the national state, when the life of the monarch was in jeopardy and the peace and security of the state were precarious. Freedom of religious and political expression was feared as a means of triggering conspiracies, internal disorders, wars, or revolutions that might pull down Church and State. Since the bad tendency of wrong opinions had become so magnified by the invention of printing, preventative censorship by means of a system of licensing all printed matter was established. Anything published without an imprimatur was criminal, and to make doubly certain that loopholes in the licensing system were plugged, the common law of criminal libel was developed.

By far the most repressive class of libel was seditious libel. It can be defined in a quite elaborate and technical manner in order to take into account the malicious or criminal intent of the accused, the bad tendency of his remarks, and their truth or falsity. But the crime was never satisfactorily defined, the necessary result of its inherent vagueness. Seditious libel has always been an accordionlike concept. Judged by actual prosecutions, the crime consisted of criticizing the government; its form, constitution, officers, laws, symbols, conduct, and so on. In effect, any comment about the government which could be construed to have the bad tendency of lowering it in the public's esteem or of disturbing the peace was seditious libel, subjecting the speaker or writer to criminal prosecution.

The philosophic principle of freedom of the mind had merely a slight influence on the expansion of freedom of speech or press. Libertarian expositions were abundant enough, but in England and America until the very late eighteenth century their libertarian quality was nearly

as narrow as the common law in crucial respects. The result was that freedom of discussion for the thought that was hated or feared had no advocates on either side of the Atlantic before the 1790's.

To be sure, one can go all the way back to the ancients, especially the Athenians and the Romans of the early republic, and discover a few statements favoring an undefined broad liberty of expression. The plays of Euripides, for example, are a storehouse of allusions to the glories and values of free speech. The hero of *Ion*, to cite an instance, hopes that his unknown mother may be Athenian so that "by my mother may free speech be mine," else he "bears a bondman's tongue"; and a passage between Jocasta and Polyneices, in *The Pheonissae*, demonstrates the Greek understanding that unwise government results from a curb on the tongues of citizens. To a Greek statesman, declared Demosthenes, no greater calamity could befall a people than "the privation of free speech." Yet there is no evidence that even the most libertarian among the Greeks suffered oral or written sedition to exist with impunity. Plato's account of the punishment of Socrates by the freedom-loving Athenians for the crime of subversive utterances is the best-known case of its kind in history. Machiavelli might have been echoing the ancients as well as representing the best thoughts of the Renaissance when he qualified the right of every man to "think all things, speak all things, write all things." He pointed out that popular governments are aspersed because the people are free to "speak ill" of them, whereas princes, though wise to allow the citizen a "liberty to have and sustain the opinions which please him best," must be "talked of with Reserve and Respect."

Spinoza went as far as anyone up to his time in advocating that the state should permit the utmost latitude for men to speak their minds. In his neglected classic, *Theologico-Political Treatise* (1670), he presented as profound and sustained an analysis of freedom of thought and speech

as had been offered, climaxing his work with a concluding chapter entitled "That In a Free State Every Man May Think What He Likes, and Say What He Thinks." From the premise that man is "by indefeasible natural right the master of his own thoughts" and cannot abdicate his "freedom of judgment," Spinoza concluded that diverse and contradictory opinions were inevitable; to compel men "to speak only according to the dictates of supreme power" would be disastrous to the state as well as to the individual. Believing, however, that "authority may be as much injured by words as by actions," he opposed an "unlimited concession" of free speech. He recognized that the individual and social interest in freedom had to be weighed against authority's competing claims: "we must, therefore, now inquire, how far such freedom can and ought to be conceded without danger to the peace of the state, or the power of the rulers."

Spinoza believed in the right to speak against the state, provided that no attempt is made to introduce any change on private authority and provided that verbal opposition is grounded in reason rather than "fraud, anger, or hatred." Argument that a law is unsound and deserves repeal should be permitted, as should any speculation concerning philosophy, religion, science, or "the liberal arts," even though falsehoods may proceed from unworthy motives; the possibility of abuse, contended Spinoza, ought not to warrant limiting the right. That right to "freedom of speech" should be recognized by the wise ruler so that resistance to him might be legitimatized and lessened and "so that men may live together in harmony, however diverse, or even openly contradictory, their opinions may be." The state that punished opinions injured itself. Acts "which alone are capable of offending," rather than the "opinions of mankind," should be brought to trial; the rights of rulers, argued Spinoza, in secular and sacred matters "should merely have to do with actions, but that every man should think what he likes and say what he thinks."

On the other hand, these libertarian notions on the scope of free expression proceeded from a premise that was shared by Machiavelli and Hobbes: the sovereign power, Spinoza wrote, has the "right to treat as enemies all men whose opinions do not, on all subjects, entirely coincide with its own"; but, he added, he was discussing the "proper" course of action for the state to follow, not its rights. Properly, it should punish only politically injurious speech as was tantamount to a seditious act. All "opinions would be seditious . . . which by their very nature nullify the compact by which the right of free action was ceded." Stirring up the people against their rulers, counseling civil disobedience, advocating the enactment of laws by unconstituted authority, teaching that contracts ought not be kept or that everyone should live as he pleases: these were, for Spinoza, criminal libels, exceptions to his rule that overt acts, rather than mere words, were alone punishable. Thus even Spinoza, for all his tolerance, drew the line at seditious utterances.

The same may be said of an equally libertarian group, the English Levellers, "who represented the first great outburst of democratic thought in history, with John Lilburne and Richard Overton leading the way." Almost any Leveller tract of the 1640's contained a passage condemning censorship and the licensing system, with an argument that freedom of speech and press were essential to the establishment of free government and personal liberty. "A Remonstrance of Many Thousand Citizens" (1646) asked Parliament to proclaim its legislative plans prior to enactment and to "heare all things that can be spoken with or against the same, and to that intent, let the imprisoned Presses at liberty, so that all mens understandings may be more conveniently informed. . . ." "The Humble Petition" of 1649, Overton's work in all likelihood, argued that when men's mouths were "kept from making noise" they are "robd of their liberties," truth suppressed, and the people kept ignorant and fit only to serve the unjust ends of tyrants. A free

A Manifestation

F R O M

Lieutenant Col. *John Lilburn*, Mr. *William Walwyn*, Mr. *Thomas Prince*, and
Mr. *Richard Overton*,

(Now Prisoners in the TOWER of London)
And others, commonly (though unjustly)

S T Y L E D

LEVELLERS.

Intended for their

FVLL VINDICATION

F R O M

The many aspersions cast upon them, to
render them odious to the World, and unse-
viceable to the *Common-wealth*.

And to satisfie and ascertain all MEN
whereunto all their Motions and Endeavours
tend, and what is the ultimate Scope of
their Engagement in the

PVBLICK AFFAIRES;

They also that render evil for good, are *Our* adversaries: because *We*
follow the thing that good is. *Esal.* 38. 20.

Printed for *W. Larnier*; and are to be sold at his Shop in *Bishops-gate*
Street, at the signe of the Black-Moor, April 14. 1649.

press was "essential unto Freedom" to prevent the nation from being placed in bondage, "for what may not be done to that people who may not speak or write, but at the pleasure of Licensers." The government must "hear all voices and judgements" by removing the "least restraint upon the Press," for the people could not enjoy liberty without "speaking, writing, printing, and publishing their minds freely...."

Despite such principled statements, there were moments when even Levellers advocated a more systematic enforcement of the licensing system—so long as it was not aimed at them. In *Englands Birth-Right* (1645), Lilburne himself, after criticizing press restraints and unlawful search and seizure of unlicensed Leveller material, complained of the freedom allowed to royalist publications and other "Malignant Books and Pamphlets tending to the ruine of the Kingdome...and freedome of People." Samuel Chidley, in a pamphlet attacking Lilburne's opponents, requested Parliament "to silence such Babblers..." and added: "I hold it one of the greatest abuses of the Commonwealth, that so many lying foolish Pamphlets have been, and are suffered to go abroad..."

William Walwyn, who has been called "the most consistently radical thinker among the Levellers," wrote a series of magnificent tracts on behalf of "the freedome of minde," liberty of conscience, and "freedome of discourse." At one point he went so far as to reject the bad-tendency test by arguing that criminal deeds alone should be punishable, but not expression. Yet even Walwyn confessed inconsistently, that words which were "scandalous, or dangerous to the State" had "upon good grounds" been prohibited by Parliament. In *The Compassionate Samaritane* (1645), he wrote, for example, in reference to "liberty of Conscience," which he thought the right of every man, that no one should be "punished or discountenanced by Authority for his Opinion, unlesse it be dangerous to the State," and he placed the identical restriction upon "the Presse."

Several Independent tractarians went as far, but no further, than their Leveller contemporaries in expanding the bounds of free expression. Roger Williams, for example, in his celebrated defense of toleration, *The Bloudy Tenent, of Persecution, for Cause of Conscience* (1644), exempted from the civil magistrate's jurisdiction all concerns of conscience, even "scandalous" doctrines in opposition to the establishment, but he broke into his argument to note parenthetically, "I speak not of scandal against the civil state, which the civil magistrate ought to punish..." Henry Robinson, in his superb discussion *Liberty of Conscience*, was one of the rare writers to confront the problem of free expression for Roman Catholics without betraying his principles. When he contended that force or compulsion of any kind had no place in matters of religion and that reason and argument were the only allowable weapons, he expressly included "Papists, Jewes, Turkes, Pagans, Hereticks, with all Infidels & Misbeleivers." Religious "combat" was to be "fought out upon eaven ground, on equal terms, neither side must expect to have greater liberty of speech, writing, Printing, or whatsoever else, then the other." All men without exception were to have the "same privilege . . . to deliver their mindes freely both in speech and writing." Yet, Robinson defended an equal right of speech and press only in the context of an argument for freedom of religion. There is no evidence that he differed from Roger Williams or William Walwyn, no evidence, that is, that he countenanced any expressions scandalizing the government or that his tolerance of sectarian controversy extended to exclusively secular, particularly state, matters.

John Milton, at least in his famous *Areopagitica*, had a secularist approach to the problem of liberty of inquiry and expression, when compared to Robinson, Walwyn, and Williams. Milton, of course, is traditionally regarded as the great apostle of the free mind. Unquestionably, several passages of the *Areopagitica*, which are ritualistically quoted



John Milton (1608-1674). (*Bettmann Archive.*)

to the exclusion of all else, carry implications of majestic breadth, but no one who reads him with care should refer—as does Zechariah Chafee, Jr.—to Milton's “dream of free speech for everybody. . . .” Milton might cry out, “Give *me* liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties,” but his use of the personal pronoun is significant, for his well-advertised tolerance did not extend to the thought that he hated. Indeed, it extended only, as he specified, to “neighboring differences, or rather indifferences,” which in 1644 meant Protestantism in a variety of Puritan forms. He specifically excluded from his spectrum of neighboring opinions “Popery, and open superstition,” which he thought “should be extirpat,” and he

banned also the "impious or evil" which "no law can possibly permit. . . ."

In a recent volume of essays littered with encomiums on Milton as the father of modern intellectual liberty, two contributions stand out as the only realistic appraisals. Salvador de Madariaga noted that as late as 1673 Milton was

still putting forth authority, and not merely authority but Bible authority, as the standard of truth. . . . I believe that it is dangerous to listen to one who claims freedom of thought in the name of an orthodoxy. . . . There is yet another standard, the willingness to grant to others that freedom of thought that you want for yourself; and from that point of view I am not certain Milton satisfies us. Indeed, I am tempted to think he did not.

The very Reverend W. R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's, referring to the exaggerated notion of Milton's libertarianism held by those who have not recently read his book, pointed out that he "did not support freedom of religious debate for Catholics, Anglicans, Atheists or non-Christians," and concluded: "it is clear that Milton himself would have excluded not only the overwhelming majority of Christians but the greater part of the human race from the benefit of his tolerance." This Anglican statement is somewhat exaggerated, since Milton later transcended his Puritanism to encompass Anglicans in a proposed united front of all Protestants against Catholics. Yet the thrust of the exaggeration is in the right direction. Dean Matthews possibly had in mind the fact that the royalist writings which Milton deplored as a "court-libell against the Parlament" were Anglican in character. Milton thought that royalist writings should be censored, pointing out that if the licensing system had any justification, it would be in the performance of the "prime service" of preventing the circulation of such material. Milton did not, in other words, even oppose the licensing system unequivocally, despite his affirmation that free and humane government results only from "free writing

and free speaking. . . ." Except for his criticism of royalist weeklies, he did not even interest himself in one of the chief issues in the controversy over freedom of the press at the time of the *Areopagitica*: the freedom of polemical news-writers. His silence on this issue helps explain the fact that in 1651 he was one of Cromwell's licensors or censors—despite his earlier and elequent denunciation of such officials—since the works that came before him for his imprimatur were corontos or news books, partisan sheets of current news. In all likelihood Milton never intended that anything but the serious works of intellectuals, chiefly scholars and Protestant divines, should be really free. A later essay revealed the point rather explicitly when he noted that if open expression was feared because it might "unsettle the weaker sort," Latin, "which the common people understand not," would be a solution for having issues "discust among the Learned only."

In *A Treatise of Civil power in Ecclesiastical Causes* (1659) Milton explicitly reserved the right of "a free and lawful debate" to all Protestants, thereby allowing even Anabaptists and Socinians on the left and Anglicans on the right to enjoy a privilege previously the prerogative of Puritanism only. But the "papist," whom Milton characterized as the "only heretic," was barred from participation, though not necessarily on religious grounds. Catholicism he thought to be less a religion than "a Roman principallitie . . . justly therefore to be suspected, not tolerated by the magistrate of another countrey." Although "just reason of state" may have been an understandable ground for restrictions on Catholic teaching and practice, at a time when the security of the government depended upon the maintenance of Protestant supremacy, Milton cut himself off from even this rationalization for intolerance. In 1673, in his tract on *True Religion, Heresie, Schism, and Toleration*, he wrote:

As for tolerating the exercise of their [Catholic] Religion, supposing their State activities not to be dangerous, I answer,

that Toleration is either public or private; and the exercise of their Religion, as far as it is Idolatrous, can be tolerated neither way; not publicly, without grievous and unsufferable scandal giv'n to all consciencious Beholders; not privately, without great offence to God, declar'd against all Idolatry, though secret. . . .

Having shown thus, that Popery, as being Idolatrous, is not to be tolerated either in Public or in Private; it must be now thought how to remove it and hinder the growth thereof, I mean in our Natives. . . . Are we to punish them by corporal punishments, or fines in their Estates, upon account of their Religion? I suppose it stands not with the Clemency of the Gospel, more then what appertains to the security of the State: But first we must remove their Idolatry, and all the furniture thereof, whether Idols, or the Mass wherein they adore their God under Bread and Wine: for the Commandment forbids to adore. . . . If they say that by removing their Idols we violate their Consciences, we have no warrant to regard Conscience which is not grounded on Scripture. . . .

These constricted views on freedom of religion influenced Milton's thought on freedom of speech and press. Writing at a time when his party was out of power and Catholic literature was being licensed under the Restoration, he complained of having to "suffer the Idolatrous books of Papists" and recommended against a policy of open debate with them. "Shall we condescend to dispute with them?" he asked and answered emphatically, "*we are not to dispute.*" He appealed to all Protestants to join "on common ground against Popery," and to that end he pleaded the case of civil liberty—for Protestants only. Can one who based his religion exclusively on the Scriptures refuse with equity "to hear or read him, who demonstrates to have gained his knowledge by the same way? is it a fair course to assert truth by arrogating to himself the only freedom of speech, and stopping the mouths of others equally gifted?" In context, Milton's question demonstrates his limited support of free speech. Perhaps his narrow conception of intellectual liberty is best revealed by his own recommendation for the

policy to be followed on press freedom. In the concluding section of the *Areopagitica* he endorsed a system of unlicensed printing, conditioned only upon the registration of all printers and authors; but he reserved the law of subsequent punishment for any abuse or licentiousness of the press: "Those which otherwise come forth, if they be found mischievous and libellous, the fire and the executioner will be the timeliest and the most effectually remedy that mans prevention can use."

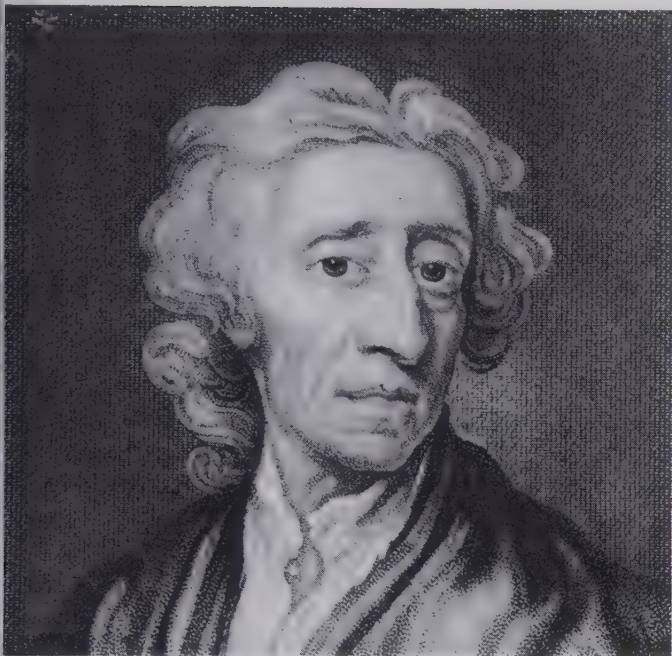
To Americans of the Framers' generation, Milton's reputation as a libertarian was rivaled only by John Locke's. In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Locke added a new dimension to the arguments for civil liberty. His predecessors had grounded their positions on the tyranny and futility of suppression, the morality of fairness and tolerance, the self-interest of sectarianism, the dictates of the Scriptures, the needs of scholarship and of Protestantism, and the certainty that truth would best falsehood in an open encounter. Although Locke employed these arguments too, he relied mainly on the contention that the mind is so frail, its understanding so limited, its beliefs so involuntary, that truth is inaccessible to it. All men, he admonished, ought to be skeptical of the validity of their own opinions, since they cannot know they are right and might very likely be in error. Opinions held with the "greatest stiffness" are more often than not the results of human incapacity—faulty judgment, prejudice, failure to examine one's own presuppositions, the inability to discover and use proofs, susceptibility to passion, and irrational habits of thought. Since men are forced to operate in a "twilight zone" of knowledge, whose truth and certainty is "scanty," it would be wisest, he wrote, for all

to maintain peace and the common offices of humanity and friendship in the diversity of opinions. . . . We should do well to commiserate our mutual ignorance, and endeavour to remove it in all the gentle and fair ways of information, and

not instantly treat others ill as obstinate and perverse because they will not renounce their own and receive our opinions, or at least those we would force upon them, when it is more probable that we are no less obstinate in not embracing some of theirs. For where is the man that has uncontestable evidence of the truth of all that he holds, or of the falsehood of all he condemns; or can say, that he has examined to the bottom all his own or other men's opinions? The necessity of believing without knowledge, nay, often upon very slight grounds, in this fleeting state of action and blindness we are in, should make us more busy and careful to inform ourselves than contain others.

Despite his elaborate analysis of the formation and nature of opinion, Locke as philosopher-psychologist did no more than endorse in principle toleration for diversity of opinions. He evinced sustained interest in the problems of freedom of expression only in connection with his preoccupation for protecting liberty of conscience, the subject of his four *Letters on Toleration*. Since he addressed himself mainly to freedom for sectarian rather than secular expression, his claim of writing in behalf of "ABSOLUTE LIBERTY" was overstated and even unjustifiable, considering the notable exceptions he made to principles that he supported in general. He could observe that the "opinions" of Catholics on Mass and of Jews on the New Testament, even though "false and absurd," were entitled to freedom because the business of the laws is to provide not for the truth of opinions but the safety of the Commonwealth as well as of every individual's goods and person. But he also believed that "no opinions contrary to human society, or to those moral rules which are necessary to the preservation of civil society, are to be tolerated by the magistrate."

Advocating that the intolerant should not be tolerated, Locke proposed punishment of any who "will not own and teach the duty of tolerating all men in matters of mere religion." In line with this view was a provision of the "Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina," which he framed, outlawing reproachful or abusive language of any religion



John Locke (1632-1704). (*Special Collections, Columbia University.*)

as a disturbance of the peace. In an obvious reference to Roman Catholicism, he recommended prosecution of that church which taught that "faith is not to be kept with heretics." There was no inconsistency here with his thesis that the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate did not reach to religious belief or practice, since he affirmed that a right ended at the point that it prejudiced others, violated their rights, or jeopardized the peace of the state.

Locke, like Spinoza, would also punish those who taught that oaths and contracts were not binding, or that loyalty was not due to the ruler; and like Milton he regarded the opinions of atheists and the political implications of Catholic doctrine as seditious. He believed that the sanctions of the law should be invoked against the members of any church

§. 101. No Person above seventeen Years of Age, shall have any Benefit or Protection of the Law, or be capable of any Place of Profit or Honour, which is not a *Member* of some *Church* or *Profession*, having his Name Recorded, in some one and but one *Religious Record*, at once.

§. 102. No Person of any other *Church* or *Profession*, shall disturb or molest any *Religious Assembly*.

§. 103. No Person whatsoever, shall speak any thing in their *Religious Assembly*, irreverently or seditiously, of the *Government* or *Governours*, or *State-Matters*.

§. 104. Any Person subscribing the *Terms of Communion* in the *Record* of the said *Church* or *Profession*, before the *Precinct Register*, and any five *Members* of the said *Church* or *Profession*, shall be thereby made a *Member* of the said *Church* or *Profession*.

§. 105. Any Person striking out his own Name, out of any *Religious Record*, or his Name being struck out by any Officer thereunto authorized by each *Church* or *Profession* respectively, shall cease to be a *Member* of that *Church* or *Profession*.

§. 106. No Man shall use any reproachful, reviling, or abusive Language, against the Religion of any *Church* or *Profession*, that being the certain way of disturbing the Peace, and of hindring the Conversion of any to the Truth, by engaging them in Quarrels and Animosities, to the hatred of the Professors and that *Profession*, which otherwise they might be brought to assent to.

§. 107. Since Charity obliges us to wish well to the Souls of all Men, and Religion ought to alter nothing in any Man's Civil Estate or Right, it shall be lawful for Slaves as well as others, to enter themselves, and be of what *Church* or *Profession* any of them shall think best, and thereof be as fully *Members* as any *Freeman*. But yet no Slave shall hereby be exempted from that *Civil Dominion* his Master hath over him, but be in all other Things in the same State and Condition he was in before.

§. 108. Assemblies, upon what Pretence soever of Religion, not observing and performing the abovesaid Rules, shall not be esteemed as Churches, but unlawful Meetings, and be punished as other Riots.

§. 109. No Person whatsoever, shall disturb, molest or persecute another for his speculative Opinions in Religion, or his Way of Worship.

§. 110. Every *Freeman* of Carolina shall have absolute Power and Authority over his *Negro Slaves*, of what Opinion or Religion soever.

§. 111. No Cause, whether Civil or Criminal, of any *Freeman*, shall be Tried in any Court of Judicature, without a Jury of his Peers.

§. 112. No Person whatsoever shall hold or claim any Land in Carolina by Purchase or Gift, or otherwise, from the Natives or any other whatsoever,

who arrogated to themselves the power of deposing kings or who professed doctrinal allegiance to another prince; for, he asked, did not their "doctrines signify, but that they may, and are ready upon any occasion to seize the government, and possess themselves of the estates and fortunes of their fellow-subjects; and that they only ask leave to be tolerated by the magistrates so long, until they find themselves strong enough to effect it?" The statement, although an allusion to the relations between English Catholics and the Vatican, applied in principle to persons of any party that advocated, even by tenuous implication, the overthrow of the government or whose opinions could be suspected of disloyalty.

Locke, in other words, drew a line at seditious utterances. At no point did he, nor did any of his libertarian precursors among the Levellers or Independents, criticize the common law of seditious libel. Indeed, he went out of his way, in the midst of an argument for complete liberty of conscience, to declare that if any person under color of freely exercising his religion, might behave "seditiously, and contrary to the public peace," he was punishable "in the same manner, and not otherwise than as if it had happened in a fair or market." That Locke meant mere verbal sedition, as well as overt action, is unquestionable, since he distinguished between peaceable and criminal "doctrine," and he listed slanderers, as well as the seditious, with thieves, murderers, and adulterers as deserving to be "suppressed." Moreover, one provision of his "Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina" stated: "No person whatsoever shall speak anything in their religious assembly irreverently or seditiously of the government or governors, or of state matters." The same constitution, incidentally, guaranteed freedom for "speculative opinions in religion," but was silent as to political opinions. A variety of personal rights were protected, but not speech or press.

Locke did not even defend a general freedom of expres-

sion when he lent his enormous prestige to those who successfully opposed re-enactment of the Licensing Act. In 1694 he drafted for the House of Commons a statement of eighteen reasons for ending the system of preventative censorship, not one a principled defense of liberty of the press nor a philosophical argument for the free mind. Locke argued that the lack of free competition injured the printing trades; that the Licensing Act was too vague and administratively unworkable; and that it was unnecessary, since the common law adequately protected against licentiousness. On these grounds of expediency, prior restraints died in England.

To suggest that Spinoza and Locke, or even Milton, were enemies of the free mind would be absurd; they were indubitably the most eminent defenders of civil liberty in their time. But they were *of* their time, and one of its *a priori* premises, unthinkable for anyone to attack, was the state's incontestable right to proscribe sedition—a commodious concept encompassing anything from mild criticism of public policy to attempted overthrow of the government. Neither Locke, Milton, nor their contemporaries ever indicated disagreement with the common law's spacious definition of unlawful discourse nor sought to limit its application. Subsequent generations of libertarians inherited from them and passed on to the American Framers in unaltered form an unbridled passion for a bridled liberty of speech. But the American Framers, however inconsistently, also inherited the principle of free speech to which they gave bold and unqualified constitutional recognition. It was the principle itself, not its originators' limiting glosses upon it nor its Framers' narrow understanding of it, that was meant to endure.

Jonathan Boucher, Tory

Joseph L. Blau

The American Revolution was not altogether a popular movement, nor was the cause of the revolting colonies espoused wholeheartedly even by those who have come to be regarded as its chief figures. It has been estimated that one third of the colonial population supported the revolutionary movement, another third was indifferent, and the remainder opposed. Even among supporters there were varying degrees of radicalism. Benjamin Franklin, for example, suggested in the 1760's that the open alternatives were for the British Empire to develop a federal structure or for the colonies to achieve a federation independently of the mother country. His devotion to England led him to favor the first of these alternatives as long as it could be maintained; only late and reluctantly did he join with the advocates of independence. Patrick Henry, on the other hand, who was much more ardent for revolution, never became converted to the idea of federalism; he was concerned about the independence of Virginia. Some, like Alexander Hamilton, admired the British Constitution and



Jonathan Boucher (1738-1804).

hoped the independent states would use it as a model; others, like Thomas Paine, tried to make the new government as unlike that of Britain as possible. All these views, and those that lay between them, were, it must be remembered, the opinions of advocates of revolution and independence.

There were, however, others in the colonies whose thought and belief fell outside the general pattern of the supporters of revolution. For the most part, they were the solidly established men of affairs whose personal fortunes were better served by a British administration than they could predictably be under a new government. Busy as they were, few of them wrote of their beliefs. Among these Tory opponents of the Revolution the almost forgotten Jonathan Boucher had his place. He was an Anglican parson and schoolmaster in Virginia and Maryland who saw only evil in the agitation of the rebels. In taking this position he dissented not only from the revolutionary outcomes of their ideas, but also from the theory of the nature of society, the Social Contract theory, on which the thinking of the proponents of revolution was based. Unlike many of his fellow ministers, both within and without the Church of England, he had not capitulated to the natural rights theory, but remained dutifully devoted to the earlier view of society as a divinely constituted authority to be obeyed, not resisted.

Boucher wrote, in an autobiographical vein, about his activities during the stirring days leading up to the revolution: "I endeavored in my sermons and in various pieces published in the *Gazettes* of the country to check the immense mischief that was impending, but I endeavored in vain." Indeed, so vain were his efforts that they brought him into personal danger as well as popular disrepute. Shortly before the beginning of the revolution, he was named by the Governor of Maryland to the vacant pulpit of Queen Anne's Parish, Prince George's County, and accepted the nomination for several reasons:

It was a good, healthy, and pleasant part of the country; and the parish had heretofore been particularly valuable because the tobacco . . . was the best in the Province; but above all it was in the same county with my dear Nelly Addison, whom I was determined to court . . . as soon as ever I should be in a situation and circumstances to render such an idea somewhat less presumptuous.

As soon as Boucher came into his new parish, however, he met with an "unpleasant reception." He was already well known as an opponent of the patriotic cause and its partisans lost no opportunity to embarrass the newly inducted vicar. The inhabitants, as he learned to his dismay, were rabid adherents of the patriot side, and there was a native-born clergyman, a Mr. Gault, who was of the same party and who had been preferred by the parishioners.

The unpopular part I had lately taken respecting government had set the people against me. They were in general violent patriots, and as I was considered as a sort of champion to the party they opposed they were taught to consider it as meritorious to oppose me. . . . Hence the very first Sunday I found the church doors shut against me; and not many Sundays after a turbulent fellow had paid eight dollars for so many loads of stones to drive me and my friends from the church by force.

Despite this initial handicap, Boucher made a place for himself in the life of the parish, attracting a small group of the less committed and refusing to compromise his principles in the interest of popularity. His life, he says, "went on with tolerable quiet though never with much comfort," until the outbreak of the revolution. Then his still outspoken opposition to the patriotic cause led to the threat of his being ejected bodily from pulpit and church. To this threat of violence he replied in kind:

And for more than six months I preached, when I did preach, with a pair of loaded pistols lying on the cushion; having

given notice that if any man, or body of men, could possibly be so lost to all sense of decency and propriety as to attempt really to do what had been long threatened, that is, to drag me out of my own pulpit, I should think myself justified before God and man in repelling violence with violence.

Shortly thereafter he was forced to return to England, where his pleas for special reward were rejected by the government.*

In 1797 Boucher published at London a collection of thirteen sermons that he had preached between 1763 and 1775, under the general title *A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution*. Surprisingly, Boucher dedicated his work to George Washington! The collection reveals its author as a man of consistent principle who held a reasoned position not too different from that of Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan*. Like Hobbes, Boucher was a man who deeply desired peace, although as a clergyman, he interpreted war as a divine judgment. Religious sectarianism and schism he found deplorable; and he argued that there was a parallel between the spirit of sect and the spirit of political factionalism:

Sects in religion and parties in the State originate, in general, from similar principles. A sect is, in fact, a revolt against the authority of the Church, just as a faction is against the authority of the State; or, in other words, a sect is a faction in the Church, as a faction is a sect in the State; and the spirit which refuses obedience to the one is equally ready to resist the other.

His arguments, therefore, are directed against both factionalism and sectarianism. For religious toleration he had no sympathy. He argued that the advocates of religious tolera-

• *Reminiscences of an American Loyalist, 1738-1789*. Being the *Autobiography* of The Rev. Boucher, Rector of Annapolis in Maryland and afterwards Vicar of Epsom, Surrey, England. Edited by his Grandson, Jonathan Bouchier. Boston and New York. Houghton Mifflin Company. The Riverside Press, Cambridge. 1925. Pp. 68-69, 73-74, 113.

tion took their stand not on the basis of principle but rather from the ulterior motive of "serving the causes of deism and revolution." Therefore, he held, to remove the "test laws" from the Virginia constitution (later he repeated his sermon in Maryland, which also had test laws) would be unwise, for it would lead, step by step, to open infidelity and to revolution.*

It was not only test laws that Boucher supported; he had also a great faith in the efficacy of law in general in maintaining the fabric of society. One of the greatest dangers of revolution, to his mind, was that when men are allowed to disregard the existing laws in one respect, they will extend their disrespect to all law. "It is thus," he declared, "that institutions and regulations which are of great moment to the welfare of society, are, imperceptibly and gradually, weakened and destroyed; for, when the laws are allowed to be set at nought in one instance, they are seldom much regarded at all."

Part of the legal structure that Boucher respected as an essential of stable government was an established church. In his views on church establishment, he was a caesaropapist, as might be expected of a clergyman of the Anglican Church. He believed that the ecclesiastical institutions of a country should conform to its civil institutions, and that the form of church government should correspond to the form of civil government. He thought it would be difficult, if not impossible, to name a government that had long retained its stability without some alliance with religion and agreed that where the civil government was arbitrary, it was suitable to have an arbitrary church. In England, however, and the British colonies, where the civil government was of a mixed character, "partaking equally of monarchical

* Jonathan Boucher, *A View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution; in thirteen discourses, preached in North America between the years 1763 and 1775; with an historical preface*. London, 1797. All further quotations in this essay are taken from that book.

A
V I E W
OF THE
CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES
OF THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION;
IN
THIRTEEN DISCOURSES,

Preached in NORTH AMERICA between the Years 1763 and 1775:

WITH AN HISTORICAL PREFACE.

BY

JONATHAN BOUCHER, A. M. AND F. A. S.

Vicar of EPSOM in the County of Surrey.

..... "At verò cum a strepitu tumultuque aures nostræ paulu-
lūm conquieverint, quid tandem causæ est, cur de republicâ quid
sentiamus taciturnitate diuturniore celemus?"

Præfat. ad Bellendenum de Statu, &c. p. xv.

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR G. G. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

M.DCC.XCVII.

and popular authority," it was appropriate to have a church whose government is mixed. To have such a church in the colonies, it was essential that the monarchic aspect should be provided, and this could be done by the appointment of a bishop for the colonies. Not to appoint such a head for the Anglican church in America was to violate the religious liberty of supporters of episcopal order, for it would be equivalent to "depriving churchmen of an indulgence and advantage which are not withheld from dissenters." Opposition to an American episcopate was, he insisted, "the only real attack upon religious liberty now existing in the British dominions," for

Religious liberty does not consist in settling nice and difficult points; such as, too probably, in the present imperfect state of religious knowledge, never will be settled to the entire satisfaction of all parties. Religious liberty, as far as it concerns the present question, consists in this, that they who maintain bishops to be of apostolic institution should have their bishops, and that they who maintain the same of presbyters should have their presbyteries.

In his eagerness to gain supporters for this position, Boucher indicated that he was willing to hold out the hand of fellowship even to Roman Catholics because they agreed with him on the sanctity of authority and were opposed, like him, to republican ideas.

Boucher's political views are most clearly presented in two of his sermons, "On Fundamental Principles," first preached in 1773, and "On Civil Liberty, Passive Obedience, and Non-Resistance," first preached in 1775. In the earlier of these sermons, he argued for the need of "just principles and righteous laws" as the foundation of human society. The proper organization of society requires, and "justice and judgment" provide, that the various aspects of society be in an organic interdependence. Since they are "the foundation and supporting principle even of the throne of God," they must all the more surely be the foundations on which authority in human affairs must rest. To destroy,

T O

George Washington Esquire,

OF MOUNT VERNON,

IN FAIRFAX COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

SIR,

IN prefixing your name to a work avowedly hostile to that Revolution in which you bore a distinguished part, I am not conscious that I deserve to be charged with inconsistency. I do not address myself to the General of a Conventional Army; but to the late dignified President of the United States, the friend of rational and sober freedom.

As a British subject I have observed with pleasure that the form of Government, under which you and your fellow-citizens now hope to find peace and happiness, however defective in many respects, has, in the unity of its executive, and the division of its legislative, powers, been framed after a British model. That, in the discharge of your duty as head of this Government, you have resisted those anarchical doctrines, which are hardly less dangerous to America than to Europe, is not more an eulogium on the wisdom of our forefathers, than honourable to your individual wisdom and integrity.

or strive to overthrow, justice and judgment can only mean to subvert all order and all security.

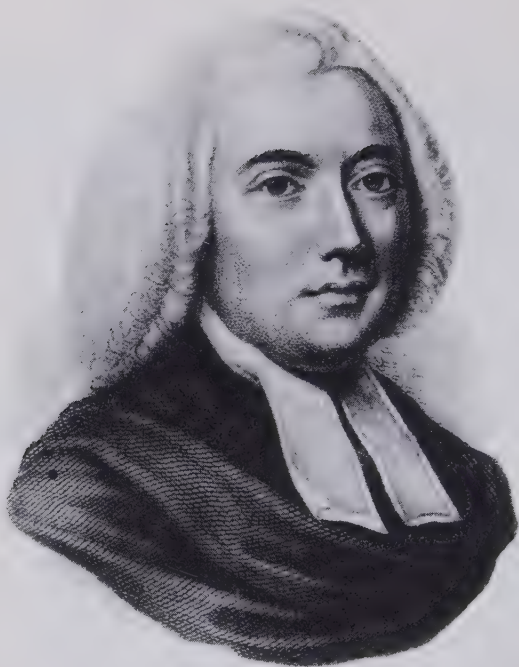
As laws can protect no people but those who have the wisdom and the virtue to protect the laws, it follows that the cause of the lawless can prosper only by overturning or *destroying* laws, which are the *foundations* of all government, if indeed they be not, properly speaking, government itself. . . . All governments, or all constitutions, have their peculiar *foundations*, or fundamental principles, which those who live under them are bound both by duty and interest to defend.

Boucher's insistence upon the importance of fundamental principles must be understood as a reaction against views of the nature of society that made the binding force of social coherence "men's supposed interests and inclination." He argued that even these views rest ultimately upon unacknowledged principles which are bad; "when we say of an abandoned man that he is *unprincipled*, we do not, I apprehend, mean all that the epithet may seem literally to import; but only that such a man is without good principles."

Of all good principles for the maintaining of a settled and firmly established social order, the most important, the "firm basis or cornerstone of all good government," is the principle of obedience for conscience' sake. This principle asserts that there is not enough force or power in any government to enable it to maintain itself unless there is a belief among its citizens that the government is inviolable, if not sacred, and therefore ought to be obeyed. When men of any sort, but in particular public figures, find fault with prevailing policies and practices, they are tending to promote an opposite conviction among the citizens, "a general persuasion that government is neither sacred nor inviolable." In the interest of government in general, then, men should withhold their criticisms of particular governments or particular acts of government. Since revolution is more dangerous than maladministration, antagonism to the acts of



Eighteenth-century cartoon showing an attempted landing of a bishop in America.



Jonathan Mayhew (1720-1766).

ministers of government should not be construed into the need for revolt against government itself. Here Boucher is arguing directly against the view of the popular origin of government that was most prevalent in America in his time and that was given clarion expression by Jonathan Mayhew. Boucher talks scornfully of

that loose notion respecting government, which has long been disseminated among the people at large with incredible industry, namely, that all government is the mere creature of the people, and may therefore be tampered with, altered, new-modeled, set up or pulled down, just as tumultuous crowds of the most disorderly persons in the community (who on such occasions are always so forward to call themselves *the people*) may happen in some giddy moments of overheated ardor to determine.

In 1775, the Reverend Mr. Jacob Duché of Philadelphia, like Boucher an Anglican minister, but unlike him a supporter of the revolutionary cause and chaplain of the Continental Congress, had preached a sermon in which a defense of the Revolution was grounded on the natural rights theory of society. Boucher's sermon "On Civil Liberty, Passive Obedience, and Non-Resistance" was intended as a public reply to the positions that had been presented by Duché. In accordance with the conviction of the importance of law that Boucher held, he argued in this sermon that there is no liberty apart from law. "Liberty is not the setting at nought and despising established laws—much less the making our own wills the rule of our own actions, or the actions of others . . . but it is the being governed by law, and by law only." Men are free when they cannot be compelled to any action by the arbitrary will of others. Laws in a well-regulated society are devised to prevent the assumption of arbitrary power by any individual or group of individuals and thus to assure to others the benefits of liberty so conceived. The more rigorously the laws are enforced, and therefore the more completely the element of arbitrariness is excluded from the social order, the more civil liberty do the citizens of any society enjoy. The civil liberty that Boucher described is like the liberty of the Christian presented by Augustine in his *Enchiridion*, a liberty to do only the right. Boucher added, however, that liberty included being restrained from wrongdoing. Thus liberty itself contains the idea of restraint. "So far from our having a right to do every thing that we please, under a notion of liberty, liberty itself is limited and confined—but limited and confined by laws which are at the same time both its foundation and its support."

From this perspective Jonathan Boucher attacked the modern theories espoused by Duché. These included the doctrine, found in many of the social contract theorists, that the end of government is the common good of mankind and that therefore government must have been insti-

tuted by common consent; the doctrine, found in many of the social contract theorists, that all men are born equal; the corollary of the social contract theory that asserts that a right of resistance to the government is reserved to the governed; and the view so prominent in many of the writers of the times that government is an evil, necessary at best, and an invasion of the natural rights of man. Against all these positions, Boucher argued that we must look to the Scriptures to learn about the origins and the ends of government, and the teachings of Scriptures are that government was the means created by God to the end that men, who are clearly formed for society, should lead godly and sober lives. Proper subordination is vital to proper government: "As soon as there were some to be governed, there were also some to govern." Inequality is part of the divine scheme for proper government. "It was the purpose of the Creator that man should be social: but, without government, there can be no society; nor, without some relative inferiority and superiority, can there be any government."

The argument, frequently met, that since the end of government is the welfare of the people, the people have the power to determine when their needs and interests are being served, Boucher repudiated. "All government," he avowed, "whether lodged in one or in many, is, in its nature, absolute and irresistible." Though rulers were ordained for the sake of the people and not for their own advantage, they were not ordained by the people but by a higher authority. "So far from deriving their authority from any supposed consent or suffrage of men, they receive their commission from Heaven; they receive it from God, the source and original of all power." While it is impossible to determine the precise form that the original government established by God had taken, the most probable is the patriarchal. Here Boucher reaffirms the position that had been taken by Sir Robert Filmer, with the assertion that

Little risk is run in affirming, that this idea of the patriarchal

origin of government has not only the most and best authority of history, as far as history goes, to support it; but that it is also by far the most natural, most consistent, and most rational idea.

Ultimately, although he denies the validity of examining the forms of government in the light of the degree to which each serves the interests of men, Boucher brings to the support of his position the argument that a patriarchal government in which obedience is enforced is not only best for a man in God's eyes, but also best for man's temporal interests.

Underlying the argument that Boucher presents in his sermons is a continuous thread of opposition to change. If it can be said that some of the proponents of the Revolution advocated change for its own sake it is all the more true of Boucher that he opposed change for its own sake, in matters of religion, politics, and morals. Change in the arts and sciences he was ready to accept, "as far at least as real improvements imply *change*." In the central and sensitive areas of religion, politics, and morals, change is undesirable, because it is precisely in these matters that "mankind are most apt to mistake innovation for improvement."

On other subjects man may speculate, try experiments, and attempt improvements, if not always with advantage, yet perhaps without danger. But there is danger, even in the notion, that religion and government admit of improvement; much of their influence and efficacy depending on the persuasion that they are already perfect.

Because of his antagonism to change, although he realized the need for education, he regretted that in the Anglican colonies most teachers were dissenters and most schools were run by dissenting religious groups. One of the incongruities that he pointed out in an undelivered sermon of 1773, "On American Education," was that "those natives who are born in the communion of the Church of England, and are intended and expected to continue in her communion, should be taught their religion by dissenters."

This could only lead to Latitudinarianism, and ultimately to the belief that one religion is as good as another; "the next step is to conclude that the thing itself is not of much moment." He advocated paying less attention to oratory in education. So many of the great masters of oratory were republican in their views that the study of oratory insensibly leads pupils to accept the views of the great orators along with their techniques.

Like many others who were themselves in the minority, Boucher is especially sensitive on the subject of the rights of minorities. He asserted that the practice of binding minorities by the decision of majorities has its basis in prudence alone, not in right. The principle of majority decision can be applied "only in regulated societies, that is to say, in communities governed by laws: and those laws have determined and specified the cases, in which alone minorities shall be bound by majorities." If the law does not, in any particular instance, sanction majority rule, then any attempt to enforce the decisions of the majority is "unlawful and oppressive." The idea of a legally constituted society transcends all conceptions of rights, whether of minorities or of majorities. A society founded on law and obedience to law can protect both majorities and minorities. Men, as individuals, cannot be trusted; the chief design of social organization is to restrict and limit man's evil nature.

The only rational idea of civil liberty, or (which is the same thing) of a legitimate and good government, as to this point, is, when the great body of the people are trained and led habitually to submit to and acquiesce in some fixed and steady principles of conduct. It is essential, moreover, to Liberty, that such principles shall be of power sufficient to control the arbitrary and capricious will of mankind; which, whenever they are not so controlled, are found to be dangerous and destructive to the best interests of society. The primary aim, therefore, of all well-framed Constitutions is, to place man, as it were, out of the reach of his own power, and also

out of the power of others as weak as himself, by placing him under the power of law.

In the twentieth century, marked as it has been by the emergence of a "new conservatism," Boucher's arguments against change may once more find a sympathetic hearing in the United States. Whether they do strike a responsive chord or not, it is valuable to recall them for several reasons. First, it is always salutary to remind ourselves that there was an antirevolutionary faction and an anti-revolutionary argument in the colonies. Second, it is instructive to see that conservatism does not split easily; one must transcend consistency to be, for example, politically liberal and religiously conservative simultaneously. Finally, in Anglo-American thought, individualism has been so stressed that it has come to seem an absolute; Boucher reminds us that there may be other values to which individualism must be sacrificed.



Herman Weiss in 1862.

An Immigrant Goes to War:

The Correspondence of

Herman and Adeline Weiss

Herman Weiss, born in 1844 in Giessen, Germany, came to Mount Vernon, New York, in 1858 and joined there two older brothers who were carpenters by trade and who conducted a sash and blind business. On July 3, 1862, in the New York County Court of Common Pleas Herman was admitted to be a citizen of the United States. On August 14, 1862, authority to raise a regiment in Putnam, Rockland, and Westchester counties for service in the Union Army was received by Col. William H. Morris. Eight days later at Yonkers, New York, Herman Weiss volunteered and was enrolled in the regiment which was organized as the 135th Infantry Regiment and later, on October 6, 1862, was designated the 6th Regiment of New York Heavy Artillery. While he was proud to be in a heavy artillery regiment, he passed most of the war as an infantry soldier. He was appointed corporal on December 29, 1862, sergeant on September 20, 1864, and was discharged on June 28, 1865, at Petersburg, Virginia. He was then twenty-one.

On September 5, 1862, ten companies of the regiment

left New York and joined the Railroad Division of the 8th Corps, Middle Department. Herman Weiss remained behind, and while it is not entirely clear why, it is a fact that on November 3, 1862, he married Adeline Clary. She was a native of New York City, one of thirteen children—twelve of whom were girls—and she moved with her family to Mount Vernon in 1852, when she was nine years old.

What follows are selections from the war correspondence of Herman and Adeline Weiss. Lack of space prohibits including many of Adeline's letters. They read like *The Perils of Pauline*: how, after the death of her mother, she and her twin sister Caroline were driven out of the house by her father who, if rumor is to be believed, had his eye on a new wife; how she and Caroline were driven out of a sister's house, where they had sought refuge, by the sister's husband; and how she and Caroline made their way to Vermont to live with still another sister whose husband was a deserter and was working there in a lumber camp. Herman by nature was a worrier, and my guess is that his wife's experiences on the home front, to say nothing of his own, provided him with ample cause.

No attempt has been made to alter, or improve upon the language, spelling, and punctuation used in the letters. Where appropriate, head notes have been provided.

HARLAN B. PHILLIPS

L Company left Yonkers on November 29, 1862, ferried to Amboy, and there entrained for Fort McHenry. The train remained in Philadelphia over night and moved on to Baltimore the following morning.

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Fort McHenry, December 9, 1862.

... You want to know all about ... what positions the boys hold. ... There was 4 companys went away from Yonkers to New York all under orders to come to fort McHenry. ... This regiment wants to have 1800 men in it and if all the companys was full there would be enough but there is none of them full so they went to work and dividet all the new men in the old companys ... all the boys lost theyr appointments and are all privates for the present. I am with our first lieutenant and I guess I will do very well as soon as every thing is settled. ... They talk about swearing us in and paying us off and I cant see the reason why they dont do it we are here now long enough to be sworn in if they want us at all ... we have very cold weather here I am sure it cannot be any colder in Mt Vernon it is worse here than it was at Jonkers for we are surroundet by water. It fell to our company to day to furnish 20 men for picket duty on long bridge and if we had been sworn in I should have went along with the greatest pleasure. however I went over this afternoon after the mail came in and took Bill with me. the captain seems to like me and he give me the privilege of going over there every day for ten days to take provisions and the mail over to the boys. It is about 3 miles across Tapscow Bay and on the turnpike to Washington they have to do guard duty there to keep the rebels from burning the bridge. ...

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss. Fort McHenry, December 13, 1862.

... We have been sworn in the day before jesterday and I expect we will get our new uniforms very soon and then I will have my picture taken as soon as we are paid off and send it to you. I expect we will look gay with red trimmed jakets and a big 6 over two cannons on our hats we shall look so strange that you will not know us any more when we get home. Bill is gone to try very hard for us to go home after we are paid off and there is some hopes of his succeeding if he continues in the colonels favor and he knows just how to come around him and talk sweet to him. We have finally succedet in getting large tents there is 12 men in our tent and we have a little camp stove into it so that we can manage to make ourselves comfortable enough. I had to pay 25 cents for straw enough to fill one of them beds that we had at Jonkers and I was glad I could get it for that price it saves me from sleeping on the bare floor while we are here at least. . . . we have some very green fellows here and I will tell you of two of them that was excused from guard duty for being so awful dumm one of them was on guard in the night about 12 oclock when the grand rounds came round he halted them and asked who comes there the answer was the grand rounds he charged bayonets on them and said there is no damned man with that name in this camp and they had to retreat and get the corporal to relieve him so as to put another man in his place that was less dangerous. the other one when he had halted them and got the answer the ground rounds said to hell with the grand rounds I thought it was the relief. You see my dear there is some fun here occasionally. . . .

In January 1863 the 6th Regiment moved from Fort McHenry to Harper's Ferry and became part of the defenses of the Upper Potomac, serving in the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division, 8th Corps from March 27, 1863, to June 1863 and with the 1st Brigade, 1st Division, 8th Corps from June 1863 to July 10, 1863.

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss. Harpers Ferry, January 9, 1863.

... Last monday afternoon we got orders to be ready to go to harpers ferry at 9 oclock on tuesday morning ... we are here now and got the shenandoa valley on one side of us the maryland hight on the other and Bollivar hight in our rear there is about 30,000 men scattered round here and there is not a house here but what can show some signs of was it is a desolate place indeed I expect we shall go either on Maryland or Bollivar hight as soon as they get all our big guns mounted. Our company has rather a bad point in line of battle we are the color company and I am generally about the third or fourth man from the flag but if we work the cannons I am gunner and have nothing to do but to sight the gun and give the order to fire. every thing is quit round here now the rebels is about 12 miles from here and we are strongly fortified here. we are only 9 miles from the battle field of Antietam and we can see where some of the men have been buried with their feet and hands stiking out of the ground our boys found a rebel officer leaning against a tree the other day and when they came up to take him prisioner they found that he was dead. we are encamped on the same ground where Col. Miles surrenderd harpers ferry to the rebels the last time.

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Fort Dunkon, February 13, 1863.

... there is hope that this war may soon be stopped for as it is going now it cannot go a great while the greatest

disatisfaction is prevailing throughout the army about 2/3rd of our regiment has made up theyr mind to go home by the first of the month to keep theyr families from starving and I have seen a letter to day wich come from a lawyer to one of the men here that the government cannot keep us if they do not pay up every 2 months and that if we can only get home any court martial would have to protect us for if they dont fulfill their contract we need not fulfill ours but the only difficulty is in getting away. Bill and myself will stand it as long as we can before we go home but if we dont see very soon where our money is gone to come from we shall do as all the rest of the men is gone to do and I pity the man that will try to stop us on our way home but perhaps something may turn up that we shall not be obliged to take such steps. . . . there is certainly something of great importance going on in the regiment and the only thing that will save it is to pay off the men immidiatly if they dont do that the men will go home and leave the officers behind them to do theyr duty they can stand it well enough they get theyr pay regular and dont do any thing else but eat and drink and live high. . . . I come near forgetting to tell you that we have moved again we seem to get in a worse place every time we move. . . . on sunday morning (inspite of Lincolns order that the sabbath shoud be observed in the army) we got orders to pack up and 2 hours afterwards was on our way to this place. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss. Camp Haight, March 28, 1863.

. . . on sunday afternoon the signal gun was fired off and I jumped up and run to our 20 pounder in a hurry we touched the fire to it and 5 minutes afterwards we heard the next station reply to it on the potomac so it went down to sandy hook about 1½ hour after that a despatch came in and the long roll beat, it is a dreadful noise and confusion every one trying to get their musket loadet and fall in the ranks as quick as possible we got 3 days rations and took only our

overcoat and planket in our knapsack and marched out of camp an hour after the gun was fired we marched down to the potomac and was put acrossed it in the pontoon boats then we made a forced march of 15 miles and stoped in a field in Virginia at 1 oclock at night at day brake the main body of the regiment moved on and our company was left behind to do picket duty on the railroad and the road leading from Hagerstown to Winchester it is the same place where Stonewall Jackson escaped from McClellan after the battle of Antietam and if McClellan had been smart enough he would have certainly caught him there. We was in the most dangerous place on monday night we stationed our pickets after dark and the lieutenant with half the men moved about 2 miles below us and left the orderly seargt and me in comand all we had was 10 men reserve in case that any thing should happen we had orders to retreat on the main body of the company. Every thing was quite untill about 11 oclock when we two made the rounds to visit the pickets wich is a dangerous business for you run the risk of being shot by your own men and the first post we come to our men did not see us untill we got close to them they jumped up and if I had not spoken to them they would have surely shot us for they said that they was just gone to pull the trigger well we give them the necessary instructions and left for the next post on the railroad it was awful dark we went acrossed the field proceeding very slow so as not to make any noise when we got about half the way we heard our pickets halt somebody and imidiatly after a musket was discharged and such yelling I never heard before we stood perfectly still and listened and strained our eyes to the utmost but we could not see any thing we then come to an understanding how to act in case we come acrossed any of them and it was just about time too for when I looked around me again I saw 3 men coming right on to us they came very slow and careful and I could just see their forms I showed my companion where they was and we dropped on the ground without making any noise he moved

off on his belly according to agreement and I remained motionless on the ground some time when they thought they heard a noise they would drop down like lightning at last I had to change my position to be able to use my musket this made some noise my bayonet sheeth striking against a small stone they dropped to the ground and in that position we remained for an hour and a half without moving I tell you during that time I thought about nothing but you I had your pictures in my breast pocket and the case almost crushed my ribs in but I suppose it wanted to come as close to my heart as possible just as I had made up my mind to move on a little so as to see them plainer I put my ear to the ground and I heard them stir I moved on without stoping to think and I soon come so close that I could plainly see what they was about. I saw that they was moving towards the woods I suppose they must have suspected that they was most to close so we kept up the chase moving on the ground like mud turtles when we got to within 20 yards of the woods I made a flank movement to reach the first trees before they should have a chance to get there but when I got there my musket struck against a stone just as I was getting up to step behind a tree they heard it jumped up and run for the woods in the oposite direction a half a dozen jumps brought them out of my sight and I thought it would be more prudent to keep my musket loadet than to fire it off at random but they was destined to have another fright for my comrade had acted on the same principle that I acted on and when he heard them running towards him he thought that I was chasing them so when they come within 12 paces of him he halted them of course they turned right for the woods again he cocked his gun and pulled the trigger two or three times but it would not go off the guerillas when they heard him daming his gun turned and chased him and I chased them till they came to near our pickets again when they was halted again by 2 or three at once and I suppose thought it advisable to retreat

at once they turned to the right and run like every thing we chased them for a little while till we lost sight of them and being pretty well wore out we went back to our rendezvous satisfied that we had quite an adventure we found our ten men all in a heap and almost frightened to death and thinking that we had surely been captured and with a lot of such adventures as this one we passed away the time almost starving to death from sunday afternoon till friday when we got orders to go back to camp I dont believe I slept 12 hours during that time.

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Camp Haight, April 4, 1863.

... Things here is undergoing a great change our Colonel has been made a brigadier general and our regiment belongs to his brigade so we belong now to the 8th army corps middle department of the upper potomac defenses of Harpers ferry 2nd division.... I have had quite a good deal of fun last night with an irishman that I have in my tent trying to get it into his head what brigade and division he belongs to but I did not succeed his head is too thick and I gave up the attempt after we had laughed enough.... he made me promise that both of us would come and see him in Haverstraw if we ever got home alive so you can make up your mind to go on an irish visit when I get home I am sure we shall have fun for you cant help laughing when you look at the man alone he looks more like a monkey than a human being.... most of these irish cant read or write and they keep me busy reading letters for them and writing answers and if you was to reade some of those letters you would kill yourself laughing....

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Camp Haight, April 26, 1863.

... I have waited for a letter from you now since one week ago jesterday but I see ... that you are not to blame as I have no doubt that you thought I would get that letter wich

you gave to Bill but neither Bill nor the letter have got here and Bill is reported a deserter I have never been so deceived in any body as I have been in him and I cant hardly believe it jet that he has deserted he always used to be so much down on any body that would not come back in time on a fourlough and through him the whole company will have to suffer for it will be hard work to get a fourlough now if they cant trust such men as him they wont trust any body else. If he was sick or any thing happened to him on the road he might have wrote a letter or sent a tellegraf dispatch to the captain and he would have been all right but now even if he does come back he will loose his pay and be punished besides. If he intendet to desert before he left here it was a very mean piece of business of him he borrowed money to go home with and a pair of boots and a shirt. You say in your letter that he said he would be home again soon and me with him I guess he had reference to the end of the war for he like a good many others imagine that the war will be settled this sumer but it is my opinion that we will have to serve out our time if we live long enough but we might have had a chance to go home on a fourlough if he had not acted so mean nothing short of death can excuse him now for he had plenty of time to inform the captain of his whereabouts of course if he is dead he is excused. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Camp Barry, May 12, 1863.

. . . I will have to tell you in the beginning that I am not able to write a great deal to night for I am completely worn out. Yesterday afternoon a woman came in from Virginia and stated that there was about 100 rebel guerrillas encamped about 20 miles from here in the mountains committing all kinds of depratations and taking the men off by force to put them in the rebel army. Of course there was no other troops round here that could perform such a desparate

march on a dark night so they called on the big 6 and our company and Comp C being the largest and best companies got orders at half past four jesterday afternoon to march at 5 oclock with only 2 meals rations and 40 round of cartridges. Yesterday and to day was the two hottest days we have had this sumer. I had my handsfull dealing out the provisions to the very last moment then I ran to me tent put your daguaretype in my pocket and put on my accoutrements and joined my company just as they was marching out. The water run right off the men and we had one man sun struck before we got to Harpers Ferry before we crossed the Schenandoah bridge we was joined by 30 cavalry and a guide and just as soon as it was dark we started up the mountains and so we stumped and pitched along up the hill and down hill over rocks and through swamps sometimes up to our knees in mud and water we marched on at that rate for about 18 miles when we halted to rest a few minutes and send some spies ahead as soon as the men touched the ground the most of them was fast asleep we stopped there about 15 minutes when the order was given to fall in and we proceedet once more when we got to the place where we expected to find them they was gone. . . .

Adeline Weiss to Herman Weiss, Mount Vernon, June 4, 1863.

. . . about three weeks ago that cartridge factory in Harlem blew up or rather one night somebody set it on fire, so the firm has hired that factory on 6th Ave and they have brought their Machinery up and had it all fixed up there. they are going to bring one hundred girls up from New York. they will employ about three hundred girls and about fifty men. most of the girls in Mt Vernon is going to work there. Carrie is going to leave the flags and go to work at the cartridges. Lizzie and Carrie is going to work monday.

Carrie has the idea she will like it much better than she does the flags. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Camp Barry, June 9, 1863.

. . . I am sorry to see that Carrie has taken a notion to work in that Cartridge Factory it is a very dangerous and unhealthy bussines and then for her to be among such a lot of girls of all carracters especially from New York City of course it is not for me to say what she shall do but if she would take my advice she would keep to work on her flags and leave that old Factory alone. I care most to much for Carrie to see her in such a place as that. Mount Vernon will be quit a lively place after they get fairly started. Underhills wife arrived here jesterday she looks as natural as ever and seems to like it out here very well. she was the first woman I shook hands with since I left home I think she will stay here altogether she is in a tent with annother woman that belongs to Comp I so there is 2 family in one tent I went to see her last night they have everything fixed very nice they have 2 beds a table a looking glass and a stove in that tent and have blankets on the floor wich do very well in the place of carpet. Bill says that if we go to some other place where we will be likely to stay for some time he is gone to have his wife come out and stay a month and he wanted me to promise him to let you come the same time so that we could get a tent together but I wont promise for I rather think that you would soon get tired of such a live although the women have it very nice in this camp all the married men have their tents together in one row a little ways from the camp and the most of the officers have their wives and children here. I believe we have about 50 of the fair sex in the regiment they get up balls and parties and seem to enjoy themselves better than if they was home . . . kiss Carrie for me and tell her to stop making cartridges for we got more now than we want to use in this war I

for my part dont want to see any more used than has been used already I am like the boy that had lost his way to all enquiries he give only one answer and that was: I want to go home....

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Camp Barry, June 26, 1863.

... I am well, indeed we have no time now to think about being sick as we have worked day and night and the men is getting so that they actually wish for the rebels to come so as to put a stop to this everlasting excitement and work but I think they will come quit soon enough for a good many of us and according to the state of affairs here now there is no doubt but that we shall have to play the most important part in the unavoidable battles wich must be fought and wich I think will be the bloodiest ever fought in the rebellion. Troops and cannons are constantly coming in and as each regiment comes in they go right to work fortifying themselves. We belong now to Hookers grand army of the Potomac and constitute his extreme right wing. Gen. French is in command here and I think that with what men we have here now we will be able to hold in check any force wich the rebels could possibly bring to bear against us but I dont think that they intend to attack us here they would like to draw us out of here but for the present we only act on the defensive. It is my opinion that this will end again on the well known battle grounds of Antietam and South Mountain and if my supposition is correct and we have no traitors in our army I think that this is about the best move the rebs could have made to help settle the war for it must result in the utter destruction of their army as Hooker will be in the rear of them wich will stop them from recrossing the potomac and the only crossing place they will have will be by way of this place and I can assure you that they will get enough to do to fight us alone how much less an enemy in their rear.

The Union Army under General Hooker had been defeated at Chancellorsville, and Lee was invading Pennsylvania. General Meade replaced Hooker in command of the Army of the Potomac, and the Harper's Ferry garrison was placed at his pleasure. The Battle of Gettysburg had been won, and on July 10, 1863, the 6th Regiment of New York Heavy Artillery joined the 1st Brigade, 3rd Division, 3rd Corps in pursuit of Lee. On July 13 Lee escaped across the Potomac and returned to Virginia. Meade followed, and in this period of maneuver the 6th Regiment participated in the engagement at Manassas Gap on July 23 and the Mine Run Campaign from November 26 through December 2, 1863.

Adeline Weiss to Herman Weiss, Mount Vernon, July 16, 1863.

... Oh Herman you have no idea the trouble their has been here in New York this week they commenced the draft monday. and the irish all turned out and mobbed the different officers where they were making out the enrollment papers, and burnt them to the ground, and almost killed the men. every nigger they met they would kill and they burnt a great many large houses and Hotel, and they would not allow a fireman to touch a engine to play on the fire. it is said of all the riots ever was in New York this beats all. they tore up the New Haven tracks so that no troops could come through, and cut the telegraph so that we could get no news from the east. yesterday their was no mail come in. the first train come in to day about five oclock. I heard to day that the governor has stopped the draft so that cooled the men down some and they succeeded in laying the track and got the cars running again. it is reported that their is a mob coming from Tuckehoo to night they have threatened to burn several houses in Mount Vernon, among which is Hoole's, Atkinson, Furger-son and two or three others. father has just come from the depot and he says the mob has not come as yet wether they

will come or not he dont know.... The village has been quiet all night so I dont think that mob could have got here....

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Warrinton, Va., July 28, 1863.

... I received 2 letters of you dated the 28th and the 29th of June just as we was drawn up in line of battle at Williamsport, and I can tell you I was glad to see your hand writing at that time. We have since been in an engagement with Lees forces at Manasses Gap and I can tell you that we are pretty nearly used up. If you was to see me now I am sure you would not know me for I am nothing but skin and bones our clothes are dirty and torn and all we have is what we have on our body. I have not had a fresh shirt to put on in 30 days and I suppose I will have to keep it on till it falls off and then go without one altogether. The army of the Potomac has never suffered as much as they have since Lee entered Maryland and Pensilvania. We have marched over 300 miles in 25 days and was drawn up in line of battle 3 times we live on raw pork and crackers that is full of worms and jet the government dont seem to be satisfied with all that but they must cheat us out of 25 dollars or 30 dollars for the 2nd day we was out we was ordered to throw away our knapsacks and carry nothing except what we had on and a blanket or an overcoat and now it is near the end of the first year they are gone to charge us with all the things we had to throw away so we wont get no money at all this time....

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Rappahannock Station, November 16, 1863.

... I feel very well and have a good appetite but we dont get rations enough to satisfy it and we suffer awfully for clothes we are actually ragged and bare footed you will get an idea how poorly we are off for clothes when I tell you that I have worn one and the same shirt for 5 weeks and there is no telling how much longer I will have to

wear it . . . we are now guarding an amunition train of about 200 waggons and I dont think that we will be relieved from this duty very soon of course we are in as much danger as if we belonged to another corps for the rebs want amunition and then they try to capture a train when they are on the march and it is but seldom that we lay still as long as we have been at present we are generally always on the go to supply the light battery in front with amunition and just as soon as we hear cannonading we pack up either to go ahead or to retreat. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Brandy Station, February 7, 1864.

. . . I write to day because we may get orders to march before to morrow and then I might not have a chance to write. Yesterday for the first time since we lay here we heard cannonading and it was near by too for towards night we could plainly hear the musketry and that is something you cant hear unless it is near by a despatch wich came in last night late said that our army had orders to cross the Rapidan in 3 different places and keep Lee employed while Butler was moving up the Peninsula for the purpose of taking Richmond and cutting Lee off entirely from Richmond and placing him between our two armies. The musketry we heard was occasioned by a rebel division trying to flank us but they fell back during the night and when the cannonading opened again this morning it was a good deal further off wich is a sign that our troops have crossed the river without much resistance if Lee retreats we will have to chase him up and bring on an engagement so that he cant interfere with Butler. I shall be very sorry if we have to move after getting everything fixed up comfortably and I dont see how we will move our train and heavy guns for you have no idea how deep the mud is down here, it has rained all day jesterday and last night but there is signs of its clearing up now. Our camp is acknowledged to

be the best winter quarters ever put up in the army of the Potomac it would be too bad to exchange comfortable bunks for the cold and muddy ground when we made calculations of staying here at least till the latter part of April. I think that the spring campagne will end the war for the rebs is getting hard up for food, clothing and forage it is rather tough to live on mule meat and they only get that twice a week they are deserting and coming in our lines by whole regiments some 300 of them come over the other day and said that the government would not muster them out so they had done it themselves their term of enlistment having expired. They dare not send a North Carolina regiment on picket unless they send some other regiment along with them to watch them and I tell you they must be in a pretty fix when they have to watch their own men and us too. Our regiment is fast filling up with new recruits we will soon have 1800 men and then they cant hold us in the field....

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Brandy Station, March 31, 1864.

... We expect to have a grand review here in a few days by the President and Gen. Grant there is great preparations being made for it. Our whole regiment got new muskets last week they are the newest Springfield patent. We had a great fight here last week not with the rebs but among ourselves we had a very deep snow and the boys of the left wing being in good spirits challenged us of the right wing to fight them a square and open fight the officers and all included, we accepted the challenge and formed in companies and every captain took command of his own company and the Colonel took command of the right wing and the lieutenant Colonel took command of the left wing and I tell you we had it hot and heavy but we drove the left wing after fighting them for about 2½ hours and took 3 of their officers prisoners the blood flowed and a good many feel the effects of it jet....

On March 10, 1864, General Grant assumed command of the Union armies. The 6th Regiment of New York Heavy Artillery served in the 1st Brigade, Reserve Artillery, Army of the Potomac, from April 1, 1864, to May 13, 1864; in the Heavy Artillery Brigade, 5th Corps, from May 13, 1864; in the 3rd Division, 5th Corps, from May 30, 1864; in the 3d Brigade, 2d Division, 5th Corps, from June 2, 1864 to July 1864. The regiment participated in the following engagements: Wilderness May 5-7; Spotsylvania Court House May 8-21 and, more particularly, the Salient on May 12 and Harris House on May 19; North Anna, May 22-26; Totopotomoy, May 27-31; Cold Harbor, June 1-12; the siege of Petersburg, June 15-July, 1864; and the assault of Petersburg, June 17-19.

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Brandy Station, April 15, 1864.

... we are all ready for a start, they have taken away from us our overcoats and other clothing so that we have nothing but a blanket a shirt and a pair of drawers besides what we have on us that is the way they do first they compells us to draw the clothing and charge it to us and then they take it away and when the time comes that we want more we have to draw more and sign our name for it. You must not expect much of a letter from me to night for my head is ready to split. ... The whole army is moving round that is it is being reorganized and the different regiments go to the different corps they are assigned to. Our regiment musters over two thousand men and the 15th N.Y. 2400 these two regiments make the first brigade of the Artillery Reserve, our Colonel is the brigade general. Our regiment is dividet in 3 batalions each to muster 800 men wich is the minimum number of an infantry regiment and the 15th is dividet the same way so our two regiments are as large as 6 infantry regiments would be. I suppose that little Colonel



Major General George Gordon Meade (1815-1872), commander of the Army of the Potomac from just before Gettysburg to the end of the war. (*Bettmann Archive.*)

of ours will try his best to get us in a fight if he possibly can if he does it will be the last one he will ever go into for he has too many friends in our regiment. I expect our first move will be to Culpepper and if we advance from there we will either pepper the rebs or be peppered ourselves wich I think will be very likely as they hold the best positions naturally fortified but I expect we shall see soon enough and I think too that whoever lives through this summer will see Richmond fall....

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Spotsylvania, May 21, 1864.

... I received your most welcome letter ... jesterday and it gives me great pleasure to see that you enjoy good health jet and I thank God that I enjoy the same blessing where so many thousands have been hurried into eternity.... we moved about 4 oclock on the morning of the 4th and crossed the Rapidan at Elys ford on a pontoon and since that time we have done nothing but march and counter-march build breast works and fight and have but little

time to eat or sleep we have been through the 12 days fight but the day before jesterday we was in the hottest of it our brigade that is the 15th and 6th Arty held the the rebels best corps in check for 2 hours till reinforcements arrived it was old Stonewall Jacksons corps comandet by Gen Ewel the fight commenced at 1/2 past 4 in the afternoon and lasted till near midnight our boys went right in for it indeed I had no idea they would stand so well and jesterday afternoon Gen Meade sent an order thanking us and praising us highly for our good conduct since that we have seen nothing of the rebs. The Mt Vernon boys I believe are all safe some may have a scratch but I know none of them is killed. I went out safe without getting touched although quite a good many fell round me our lieutenant fell alongside of me the bullets come so thick that a man could hear or see nothing it was one continuous roar and the smoke was sufficating....

Adeline Weiss to Herman Weiss, Gowanus, June 12, 1864.
 ... Your ... letters ... reached me yesterday morning and I can assure you that words cannot express my feelings when I received them. I was so pleased that I did not know wether I was on my head or my heels (for I was afraid I should never hear from you again) for it was reported around the village that you was killed. at first I did not believe it, but in a few days it seemed to be in every body's mouth and where ever I went I could hear it. A week ago last monday I see a young friend of mine and the first thing she said when she meet me was Oh Addie is it true that Herman was killed. I told her I did not believe it nor I would not untill I see it in the paper, she says why Addie it was in the paper. I then asked her what paper it was in she said that she could not tell me, then I went home and I believed that their was some truth in it for I did not think that any person would tell me such a thing unless their was some truth in it when I got home I gave up. I thought I



Herman Weiss in 1864.

would go crazy. I declare I was almost wild. I felt as though I did not have a friend in the world if you was gone. My dear I never knew how much I thought of you till then. I really wished to die when I heard of it and again last week I heard that you was not killed but badly wounded lying in the hospital so you can imagine how pleased I was when I received those letter from you stating that you were alive and well. I never was so happy in all my life. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Petersburg, June 21, 1864.

. . . You must not believe any rumor no matter where it comes from if anything happens to me you will here it from Underhill or Bill for it is not likely that the 3 of us will be killed at once but I hope and pray that I may live to see you again it is my only wish that I may get home once more to enjoy a few years of peace and happiness with you for you have no idea what a soldiers live is we have no rest day or night cant wash nor eat and if we would we would have nothing to eat half the time they talk about the rebs not having anything to eat and wear I can assure you they have more than we do. . . . I do not think that such awful fighting can last a great deal longer if it does there will be no men left. We had about 1800 good fighting men in our regiment and now after a campaign of hardly 7 weeks we have not 800 of them left and other regiments is worse than ours besides the campaign is not over yet nor likely to be very soon. We are now about one miles from Petersbourgh and that is about 25 miles from Richmond we have been to within 6 miles of Richmond but that was on the other side of the James river we crossed the James river on the 18th and that was the first time since I have been cut that I saw something like civilization it looked like the north river with all the steamboats on it since that time it has been one continual fight we are now laying in breastworks only 500 yards from the rebs and when we

are out on picket we could very handy speak together but as soon as a man stands up there is about 50 bullets whistling round him how we will take these works is hard telling wether by flanking or digging but enough of this one thing is sure we are all tired of the war and none of us would care how it is settled if it was only settled some way for the whole of it is more politics after all than humanity. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Petersburg, June 30, 1864.

. . . You say it is very hot at home but I think if you was blown here you would thing it was hotter than hot it is so hot here that the sweat runs off me in little streams in the coolest place and then you must further take in consideration that we lay in breastworks where the sun pours right down on us and most of the time we dare not move for sticking your head above the works is taking your life in your hands we loose more or less every day but I think we inflict as much damage as we receive. It is dreadful to be woundet now for it mortifys so quick this hot weather. . . . We come to the front again in the night before last they gave us 3 days rest and that was only long enough to get clean once more. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Petersburg, July 3, 1864.

. . . You say that you are sick and tired of the war. There is not a soldier here both union and confederate but what would be willing to stop fighting right away it is only politicians, contractors and the officers that keep it agoing of course we are sworn to obey orders for as long as we have enlisted for and after that we can go home if we live a good deal wiser than we come out. To show you that the men on both sides are tired of fighting I will tell you what happened about an hour ago. It seems that the rebs had seen from there breastworks that the mail and papers had come in to

us and they wanted to get some of ours for some of theirs so they got a half a dozen pieces of shelter tents stuck them on sticks and begin to wave them when our boys seen them they waved some of the papers and both parties jumped over the breastworks without arms and met about half way shook hands exchanged papers had a talk together and made up that the pickets should not fire at each other as long as they kept within their own lines and then both parties went back satisfied with the result and since that I have not heard a shot fired right in our front you can see by that they would like to have the war over as well as we of course they fight desparately when we attack them but that is only natural they dont want to have it said that they are a poor set of men no more than we would. I . . . hope that it will soon be over. . . . the thing is to whip their army and that is something we have not done yet. . . .

Adeline Weiss to Herman Weiss, New York City, July 24, 1864.

. . . you speak of not having rain, why we are in as bad a fix as you are. we have not had any rain of any consequence in over two months and it dont look anything like rain yet. Everything is being parched up with the dry weather, if it dont rain soon I am afraid we will have no crops, and I dont know what poor folks will do for of course it will make everything higher than what they are now. I will give you the prices of a few articles. Butter is 50 cents a pound sugar from 30 to 40 cents a pound, eggs 3 and 4 a shilling and Beef from 30 to 40 cents a pound. Carrie was telling me that she was looking in yesterday's paper and she see that coal is \$12.50 a ton. I dont know for my part what the poorer class of people will do this winter for every thing seems to get dearer every day. . . .

In July 1864 the 6th Regiment of New York Heavy Artillery became part of the 1st Brigade, Harden's Division, 22d Corps, and went into reserve at Fort Reno in the defenses of Washington. From September 27, 1864, to December 1864 they served in the 1st Brigade, Kitching's Provisional Division, Army of the Shenandoah, and took part in the engagement of Cedar Creek on October 19, 1864.

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Martinsburg, October 9, 1864.

... No doubt you are anxious to hear from me but I have had no chance to write since we left Harpers Ferry. ... We was called away from Washington very unexpectedly to guard a large train to the front and I can tell you we have had hard times of it we have never done harder marching then we did on this march we made 120 miles in 4 days then we rested one day and come all the way back again. The train we guarded was 6 miles long and about 900 wag-gons coming back we brought sick and wounded from the front, we had several skirmishes with the guerillas on the road, the valley is full of them, we got here jesterday and it is so cold that we had to set up all night by the fires. ...

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Middletown, Va., October 21, 1864.

... I have not heard from you since we left Washington wich is over 4 weeks now ... We have seen some very hard times.... I will ... tell you the worst that happened to us and that was the day before jesterday. Gen. Sheridan had gone to Washington on some business and left Gen. Wright of the 6th corps in command everything had been quiet for about 2 weeks and nobody expected an attack we was all encamped our brigade laying on the extreme left about 4 oclock in the morning. I got up and I heard our pickets fire a shot every now and then I made up my mind that the rebs was trying to flank us, a little while after that



Adeline (left) and Herman Weiss and Adeline's twin Caroline
in 1862...



...and in 1923.

when most of the men was in their tents asleep a whole volley of musketry was poured right into our camp no doubt thinking they would capture us all but they was mistaken the men all turned out promptly and a hand to hand fight took place in wich we repulsed them our next move was to advance skirmishes and form in line of battle behind them but the rebs came up before we had accomplished that and charged on us in 2 lines of battle and even here we would have got the best of them but a new regiment on our right broke and run leaving our regiment completely cut off from the rest of course we had to fall back wich we done in good order and fighting for over 2 miles this gave our whole line a chance to fall back and form again we charged several times retaking some of the cannon that they had taken from us but things went against us and we had to fall back again so that by 12 oclock they had drove us about 5 miles when Gen Sheridan dashed along the road with his staff he had his hat in one hand and his sword in the other the men give one tremendous cheer he saluted on all sides and pointing to the front he cried so loud that we could all hear him above the roar of cannon and musketry. Boys follow me every regiment shall be in their old camp by night and my headquarters at the old place and with this he dashed forward and every man followed up with the greatest confidence we charged all along the line broke through their centre and turned their flank they gave way and fled in the greatest confusion so great was their terror that they throwed away everything our cavalry broke through them now on the road and dashed right on never stopping till they had dashed through Strasbourgh and to Fishers hill when they formed in line and drove the rebs back on to us again these was all captured besides we retook all our prisoners and cannon besides 45 pieces of artillery in fact we took all we lost and all the rebels had and we all encamped or rather rested in the places where our camps had been and Sheridan established his headquarters at the old place we lost a good many men but the rebs was cut up worse. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Martinsburg, October 28, 1864.

... We lost everything on the 19th it was as hard a fight as ever we was into the rebels was in our camp before we knowed it and we had a regular hand to hand fight in wich we repulsed the rebs first off this gave us time to fall back but they soon came up in force and drove us and took 22 cannon from us. At last when it looked as though they was actually going to drive us back as far as Winchester about 40 of us and a captain ... of our regiment at that time planted our two regimental flags in the ground alongside of a cannon and resolved to hold that position and we did hold it 3 times did the rebels charge on us and take that cannon and 3 times we charged back and retook it again the troops on our right gave way but seeing that we was determined to stop there they regained their ground and now things turned in our favor we got fresh artillery and we made it so hot for the rebs they thought it was time to leave and they run back a great deal faster than they came and we was not slow in helping them along we retook all our cannon and 56 of theirs and run them back over 20 miles the prisoners we took all say that they have never been routed so before they all think we fell back on purpose in the morning so as to get them into a trap. I dont hardly think there will be much more fighting in the valley this fall and I shall be glad when we get into winter quarters...

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Winchester, Va., November 6, 1864.

... I have a cold but I cant expect anything else after the exposure we have gone through. You want to know if I had long to wait before I could get more clothing...we have had to wait from the 19th till now and have not got anything jet ... there is no telling when we will get it. I can tell you it is rather hard to be without a tent and warm clothing when it freezes $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch of ice every night and jesterday it snowed for the first time but all that we might get used to if it was not for getting full of lice of wich we

cant get clear till we have a change of under clothing but never mind what is the use of talking about this there is a better time coming and I am in hopes before long. I expect that the army will go into winter quarters after election and I hear our regiment will winter around Baltimore. . . . We have great excitement here about election from what I can see I think that old Abe will be reelected what goes against McClellan most in the army is that the rebels all like him so well. . . .

In December 1864 the 6th Regiment of New York Heavy Artillery joined the 2d Brigade, Ferrero's Division, Army of the James, at Bermuda Hundred where they remained until the end of the war.

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Dutch Gap, January 1, 1865.

. . . What this place is called I dont know all I know is that it is the defenses of Bermuda hundred and that we are very near Dutch gap where they are digging that canal. we have good works here but they are very thinly manned the rebels works is about a mile in front of us and seem to be very strong our pickets is about 50 yards apart and talk together they do not shoot at each other now the only thing we hear is the continual cannonading at Dutch gap. It is a very lonely place here I dont like it as much as I did our old position in front of Petersborough but I suppose we got to take it as it comes all I ask of them is that I may not get shot the next 8 months to come if I dont I think I can get through all the rest. There my dear you have now got my whole history up to this first day of 1865.

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Bermuda Front, January 30, 1865.

. . . A week ago jesterday old Lee thought he would astonish the world so he told his men that all they would have to do

would be just to talk over here and take possession for we was only Pensylvania hundred days men so about 9 oclock at night after we had gone to bed they come out and advanced on our picket line where they got such a warm reception that after a very short time they turned and ran with a heavy loss their officers tried to make them charge the second time but the men took the butts of their muskets to them and hurt some of them so bad that they have since died so the deserters report. Of course we was in the breastworks all night and it was very cold. On monday night they tried the same thing on a larger scale they fetched 2 rams and some gun boats down the river and had some 5000 troops on transports to land them between our picket line and breastworks they made the attack about the same time as they did the night before it was very dark and cold but for all that we was on the look out for them and our pickets let them come up very close and before they opened on them yelled out to them: "right this way Jonny here is where you will find Pensylvania 100 days men with plenty of overcoats, plankets and well filled haversacks wich they are ready to give to you and the receipt for them right away" well they charged twice but could not make it go so they give that up. In the mean time the gun boats had engaged our batteries with the intention of silencing them and land their troops so that we would be flanked and then they could run down to city point and cut off our comuncations and shell us out of here in a very short time but things did not work right one of their gun boats was blowed up by one of our batteries and every man on board perished they had 56 men aboard and their 2 rams got aground and could not get off till the next afternoon and that brought on a terrible artillery duel our batteries trying to sink them and the rebel land batteries playing on our batteries so as to draw their attention from the boats so was late on Tuesday night before this fight stopped and old Lee did not make out to astonish the world but he did manage to keep us out doors for several nights laying on

the cold ground instead of laying in our bunks and that gave me a bad cold again so that I dont feel any to well at present. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Bermuda Front, February 5, 1865.

. . . The papers is full of peace accounts but I dont think it will amount to much after all a few days ago the rebel vice president and two others came across our line and proceeded to fortress Monroe on a peace mission but they are not authorized and go there in the same way that Blair went to Richmond. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Bermuda Front, February 20, 1865.

. . . Before the rebel peace commissioners went to Fort Monroe there used to be a good many deserters come in our line but while they had any hopes of peace the deserting stoppeed altogether and not a man came over till after the commissioners had gone back to Richmond it commenced again and since that time they come in at the rate of from 25 to 50 every night between these two rivers alone a distance of about 3 miles our regiment gets about 9 or 10 every night this of course is very pleasant for every rebel wich comes in is one less to fight but it makes it very dangerous for our men on the picket line as well as in camp for the rebel pickets have to fire on their deserters and of course we have to lay low till they get cooled down but very often these deserters make it up with their friends on the picket line to give them time enough to get into our lines before they open on them and when they make such an arrangement the rebel pickets dont shoot untill we throw a cartridge in the fire wich is the signal that their friends got in safe then one of them will hallow halt and fire his musket of course that gives the alarm and the firing runs all along the line and everytime there is any firing we have to turn out and get in the breastworks for the bullets come over and strike in our camp so that it is not safe to stay in it. Last Thursday night I was on picket and I had five deserters

come along my line the boys give them something to eat and then I took them to my post and talked with them till one oclock before I sent them in to headquarters one of them give me a piece of tobacco and the other one a ring wich I will send to you I had hardly send them off when the rebels opened on us and made a charge but it was of short duration the fire of our men was so terrible and destructive that they turned back and run for their breast-works some of them never got there about 9 of them were killed and a lot woundet and not one of our men was hurt. 7 of them laid down on the ground close to our pits and when the affair was over they came in and we learned from them that they had made the charge with the intention of driving us out of the woods and straightening their own picket line they had 600 picket men 200 of them had picks and shovels to digg rifle pits as soon as we should be drove out of ours but they did not succeed although some of them came close enough. one of our corporals put the muzzle of his gun against the breast of one of them and shot him dead. The deserters say that they got orders to take that part of our line if it costs them a whole division so I suppose we shall have more or less fighting here all the time. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Bermuda Front, March 16, 1865.

. . . the rain drives right through our canvas roof and wets my paper however I must tell you something very romantic before I close. We had a very good looking corporal in our regiment he belonged to Comp K, he was on picket the other day and did not feel well so he asked the officer if he could go to camp and as it was in the day when non-commissioned officers are not much needed in the line the officer in command gave him permission to go to camp and nobody thought anything of it but what was our surprise when coming into camp we heard that the corporal had been taken very sick so that the doctor had send him right off to the division hospital and that then and there

this same good looking corporal had been relieved of nice little boy and that the corporal and the boy was doing first rate there now what do you think of that dear. Dont you think the big 6 is a remarkable regiment at all events I think it is most time the regiment went home for fear some of us good looking Seargt might be delivered. . .

Adeline Weiss to Herman Weiss, Vermont, March 22, 1865

. . . I think it was quite a grand thing about that corporal what a woman she must have been. I cant contrive how she hid it. I should think her tent mates would have known it . . . how long has she been in the service? The idea of her being on picket when she was taken sick. She must have been more than the common run of woman or she could never stood soldiering especially in her condition. Now dear what was your motive in not telling me that you was a Seargt before I dont see what reason you had for it but I suppose you had one or you would have told me before. I have always thought and told the folks that would ask me what you were that you was a corporal. . . little Danny Horton is home. I suppose you know that rebels has had him prisoner for I should think something like a year. he got home saturday. he was paroled. Lizzie says he is dreadful thin. he lived on nothing but a pint of meal a day. he says they starved him (that is the rebels) to join their army. he said he would die first. Lizzie says he cant scarcely walk he is so weak, poor little fellow, I feel sorry for him. before we came out here his mother said she never expected to hear from him again. she had given him up for dead she must have been somewhat surprised when she see him. I hope and pray that you may never fall in the Rebs hands. Their is a man out here that enlisted last summer as soon as he went down south he was taken prisoner they kept him about five months then he was paroled when he came home he was nothing but a skeleton. he only weighed seventy pounds. he said they only gave him enough meal to keep life in their bodies. he said he could not have stood it much longer when they let him go

he could not walk alone without assistance. he is getting to look first rate now he is gaining fast. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Bermuda Front, March 28, 1865.

. . . You ask how long that woman was in our regt. she was in it pretty near from the time it came out and it is no wonder at all that her tent mates did not know that she was a woman for you must know that we never undress to go to bed on the contrary we dress up we go to bed with boots overcoat and all on and she could find chances enough when she would be in the tent alone to change her clothes and as for hiding her appearance was easy enough for you know there is a great many woman that dont show much anyway and then soldier clothes dont fit very snug to the body the only remarkable thing is that she could stand it so to the very last day but I suppose she was tough of course no one in the regiment suspected a woman to be among us and that made her more secure from detection but I think she has heard some awful talk some times for of course when men is alone together they will talk just the same as when a lot of girls or woman get together it would be hard now for a woman to be in this regiment for the boys is having fun running after the corporals and catching them for the purpose of seeing wether they are boys or girls and I can tell you they dont show them much mercy till they have satisfied themselves. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Bermuda Front, March 30, 1865.

. . . I went to bed last night about 9 oclock and after thinking of you and home for a while (I do every night get asleep that way) I got about two thirds asleep when all at once I thought it was thundering very heavy and I laid there wondering how quick that shower had come up but I was not to wonder a great while for very soon the noises became one general roar and my bunk fairly shook I was wide awake and out of doors in a minute when we all

stood on the top of the breastwork and listened to the awfulest cannonading that ever we heard. It was as near as I can judge about the same place that we used to lay in front of Petersborough last summer I can say that much that I was present last summer when Burnside's mine was exploded and I also heard the cannonading at Gettysburgh and was along through the whole of Grants campaign through the wilderness where perhaps more cannonading and musketry was heard than ever before in any country but if I had to give a discription of the noise last night I should say put all this cannonading together and in a space about 5 miles in length and you will not think it any worse than last night. It was kept up all night but the first two hours was the hottest. after 12 oclock it commenced to rain very hard but that did not stop them any in their work of destruction they have kept it up nearly all day but to night or rather for the last half hour I have not heard a gun and hope I wont hear any more to night the rain has ceased too and the young moon is shining brightly. We have not yet heard what occasioned this awful engagement all we know is that the rebels was the attacking party and must have suffered terrible loss in butting their heads against such a wall of iron. I think Lee is getting desperate, he wants to get out but he will not find it very easy work, he has already staid longer than he ought to have done.

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Bermuda Front, April 3, 1865.

I must write a few lines to notify you that we are going to move in the morning. The rebels evecuated here last night or rather early this morning. . . . Petersborough and Richmond are captured with thousands of prisoners and all the cannon and I think Lee will not get out as easy as he thought he would for our army is all round him and his army if indeed he has any more is completely demoralized. The fighting has been terrible for about a week

and it is very little sleep we have had in that time therefore my dear you must excuse me for not writing any more at present I must lay down and get some rest for I dont know how far I shall have to march to morrow.

When the fighting ended the 6th Regiment of New York Heavy Artillery was involved in provost duties until it was honorably discharged and mustered out of the service on August 24, 1865.

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Petersburg, April 24, 1865.

... we are now in town again doing provost duty and that is the miserablest duty a soldier can do in a place like this besides the duty is very hard. for instance now we have only about 3 or 4 men in the barracks out of the whole company and they came off this morning and will be out again to night. I expect I shall be out to night with a squad of man patrolling the streets wich job I dont like at all for we have to go to every bad house and see that no officers or soldiers are there and most of the time you can find them full we have to arrest them all and bring them to the provost marshels office and I can tell you it is not very pleasant business to go into such houses and pull men out of bed especially when they are our superiors in rank but when I am on such expeditions I make short work of it. I dont only take the men but I take the women too then they are kept under guard till day light and that saves me the trouble of going to their houses twice in one night. I shall not be sorry when we get relieved from this kind of work.

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Petersburg, May 2, 1865.

... our duty here is very hard at present. I am on duty every other day wich is pretty near as much as a man can possibly do. it would not be quit so hard but the men get

drunk every chance they get and consequently they got to be watched very close and that makes more work for the Seargt. I do not care how quick we move from here and I dont think that we will have to stay here a great deal longer indeed there is a very good chance for us to be mustered out in this month for everything goes to show that the government intends to discharge the biggest part of the army by the first of June.

... Our mustering out papers have come and I am in hopes they will go right to work at them for I can assure you I feel very anxious to get home. I can hardly realize it that the war is over and that we are to be discharged nothing else is talked about now but going home indeed sometimes I think it is all a dream and I try to wake myself up but in whatever directions a man may turn he hears soldiers talking about going home and I have finally come to the conclusion that what everybody says must be true but oh dear me what awful long days these are why it seems to me a day now is as long as a week used to be. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Petersburg, May 8, 1865.

... My company is doing duty at the depot and when on duty I get to stand 24 hours on the door examining passes and papers and I tell you it is no small job, you can get an idea of it when you see a crowd in a New York depot just before a train is going out with the disadvantage here that instead of getting tickets and paying for them everybody has to have a pass and there you stand with two three hundred people citizens soldiers niggers and all packing papers at you and everybody trying to have his or her pass examined first some will say please sir others will swear but I stand there working as lively as a man possibly can giving all manner of explanations hearing a dozen talk to me at once and answering them all in the most polite way without changing even a muscle in my face even if I should be mad enough at some of them to eat them up for a great many unable to get passes will play all kinds of games to get

through and therefore it is necessary that a man has a quick eye for as they are passing in some will hold out old passes that is good for nothing or counterfeit. . . . I have a good deal of fun with the niggers they are like the irish they talk round for a half hour before they will tell you what they actually came for and if one of them comes and begins to talk about his grandmother or some other of his numerous relations I give him the good advise to go to the provost martial and get a pass that generally has the desired effect for if he has one he will then tell you so and search in his forty eleven pockets for it. The ladies or rather a good many of them carry their passes in their stocking round here and many a nice foot and leg have I seen both white and colored when the dear little creature (she can smoke her pipe and chew tobacco) puts her foot down and searches in her stocking generally the left one for her pass of course I cant help seeing this dear Addie for it is in my natural line of sight and I got to stand there and wait till the lady gets through her performance but you must not think that I am any the worse for it on the contrary I can but pity the poor creatures for such an utter want of delicacy. I have now given you a pretty good account of what I do here and that I have a good right to say that I am tired out after 24 hours of such duties but I dont think it will last a great while longer for the government of the city will soon be turned over to the civil authorities and than our duty will become less. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Petersburg, May 20, 1865.

. . . It must look nice round home now, here it is rather hot they have had strawberries and cherries here for over two weeks in the market it makes a man feel bad to look at all these things and not be able to get them and be almost starved to death besides our rations now seems to consist of only coffee and hard tack I guess some of the quartermasters want to make some money before they go home for we have hardly ever fared worse on the march

than we do now. I am as thin as a rail and it almost looks as if they was trying to starve a lot of us to death to get rid of mustering us out but they are mistaken we have lived as long in spite of them I guess we can manage to get along a little while longer but never mind we will make up for it when we get home. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Lunenburg Court House, May 26, 1865.

. . . Our major commanding our battalion is a provost marshal of the County of Lunenburg and we come here to see that the laws of the U.S. are enforced to make everybody take the oath of allegiance and to make the niggers work and so forth. I can give you no idea of this place for if I was to tell you the truth you would hardly believe it there is one house every 10 miles throughout the county the citizens tell me they poll about 600 votes in the whole county and it is about 4 times as large as Westchester Co. The town of Lunenburg as it is called consists of the court house (in wick I have made my quarters pro tem) a church a school house and about a dozen one story shanties they cant be called houses the country round is the roughest and the hottest I have ever been in and we all hope and pray that our stay here may be short but it dont look so for our officers say that we will be likely to serve our time out here the bare thought of staying here 3 months is killing me we will never see a newspaper here and I hardly think we will get more than one mail in two weeks and as for rations I expect we will fare bad enough here for I never saw a poorer county in my live. I think we was brought here through the influence of our Col who is very anxious to keep us in the service as long as possible and I hear that he volunteered to some here and wrote to the war department that the regiment would all like to serve out their time if he has done that I wish him no other harm than that he may chocke to death telling such infernal lies. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Lunenburg, June 13, 1865.

... I am at present in an even more secludet spot jet than I was in when I last wrote to you for I am in charge of the Freedmens camp wich is about a mile from the court house in the woods. at present I have under my charge about 130 women and children of all ages and only a few crippled men because all the able bodied men are hired out as soon as they get here but nobody wants any women or children. My work here is light all I have to do is just to take in the new comers to hire them out as quick as possible and to issue rations to them while they stay here, but I see hear or smell nothing but niggers, but I am in hopes that we will soon be away from here, our captain told me to day that is at most 2 weeks we would get away from here.

I read quite a piece about us in the Sunday Mercury of last week stating why we ought to be home and also giving the reasons why we was not home long ago. it was got up well and did not spare our head officers any and I also saw an article in there stating that all heavy artillery regiments and all dismounted cavalry should be discharged imidiately.

... I have some hopes now of getting home sometime in July and I only hope I may not be disapointed for I declare time drags along so slow in this out of the way place that I can hardly notice it going at all but I suppose it is because we are thinking about getting home all the time and even if a man was surroundet with all the luxuries of a live, time could never pass in a place like this. I think certainly that this was the last place ever created and I think it was made late on saturday night by candle light but enough of this or I might work myself in a passion talking about a place that was never worth mentioning.... Well my dear I have told you about everything now but my farm for you must know that I got all my niggers camped on a big plantation my crop of cherries has been very good and I have had the full benefit of them for the first time in 3 years but they are all out now and I have

begun reaping my blackberries of wich I have several hundred acres and I think that with the help of these things I shall make out to live either till uncle Sam discharges us or sees fit to give us better rations than he does now. I think that this plantation could have with proper care and management been made to bring forth more than cherries and blackberries but you know the Yanks came down this way and old massa runned away and so forth. . . .

Herman Weiss to Adeline Weiss, Petersburg, June 22, 1865.

We started jesterday morning at 5 oclock from Lunenburg Court House and marched to Burksville 25 miles we got there by 1 oclock and started right off for here where we arrived last night at 6 oclock making the whole distance of 77 miles in 13 hours.

. . . To day our regiment has all been split up. The men wich are going home amount to about 300 and about 700 will have to stay. tomorrow morning at 6 oclock we are going to have the last dress parade as a regiment. I suppose you would like to know wether I am one of the 300. I am very happy that I can tell you that I am for the same day I wrote you my last letter they found our original muster rolls and that states that we shall be discharged 3 years from the day of enlistment but you must not be too glad my dear for I do not think that we shall be home before the 10th or 15th of July we shall go to Yonkers to be mustered out. I suppose we will lay there till all the papers is made up. . . . I will write when we get to Washington and let you know when to expect me home. . . .

Andrew Carnegie:

Child of Chartism

Joseph Frazier Wall

Andrew Carnegie, the Scottish immigrant who began his employment as a bobbin-boy at \$1.25 a week and who fifty-three years later was to sell his steel company for \$492 million dollars, became to the public the substance that gave reality to the Horatio Alger myth. So spectacular an epic of acquisition could not fail to find its celebrators, and whatever the point of view his individual biographers have held, be it the frankly hostile view of John K. Winkler or the uncritical attitude of Burton Hendrick, it has been this theme of capitalistic accumulation that has always been stressed.

Carnegie's life, however, presents a far more complicated historical problem than that of a capitalistic success story, and Carnegie himself is perhaps the most complex and hence most interesting of all of our major industrial figures of the late nineteenth century. To a great extent, this complexity is directly related to the radical Scottish environment out of which Carnegie came and which remained a major influence upon his life.

The first ancestor of Andrew Carnegie of whom there appears to be any record was James Carnegie, who came to a small settlement of weavers, Patiemoir, some two miles south of the town of Dunfermline in Fifeshire, Scotland, sometime around the mid-eighteenth century. The handloom weavers, particularly the weavers of linen throughout northern Europe, have had a long tradition of radical agitation unusual for a skilled craft organization, a tradition that in itself presents an interesting sociological problem. Dunfermline, as a linen-weaving center for Scotland, was no exception to the phenomenon, nor was James Carnegie to be an exception to his craft. He early assumed prominence among the radical weavers, and during the bad harvests of 1770 he was arrested for sedition as a leader of the Meal Riots in his community. His son, Andrew Carnegie, grandfather of the man who would make his name known throughout the world, was an even more conspicuous personality in Patiemoir. Accepting both his father's trade and politics, Andrew never permitted the former to interfere with his concern for the latter. Gathering his fellow workers together in a long, low one-storied cottage, which he named the College of Patiemoir, he as the self-appointed professor held nightly discussion sessions in which nearly all of the weavers of the community participated. The discussion never lagged even though radicalism was the sentiment common to all, and the participants, well fortified with malt whisky, were equal to any topic—theological, philosophical, political, or economic—that might be presented.

The "professor's" son, William, still following the family trade, moved into Dunfermline in the late 1820's along with most of the other weavers of Patiemoir, for the industry was becoming centralized with the weavers using common bleaching fields as well as purchasing and marketing agents. Soon after moving to Dunfermline William Carnegie became the most successful weaver in his family, and at the



William Cobbett (1763-1835). Carnegie's grandfather was a frequent contributor to Cobbett's radical journal, *Political Register*.

height of his career owned four looms and had several apprentices. Temporary prosperity, however, in no way dimmed his enthusiasm for the radical causes that his family had espoused. As a young man newly arrived in Dunfermline, he had become a close friend of the most outspokenly radical family in town, the Thomas Morrison family. This friendship became an alliance in 1834, when William married Margaret, Tom Morrison's daughter.

The radicalism of Tom Morrison dated back to the revolutionary days of 1793, when along with many of his fellow townsmen, Morrison had read Tom Paine and had enthusiastically supported the Jacobin regicides across the Channel. He had been a leader in 1794 in the formation of a local chapter of The Friends of the People, a secret political organization widespread throughout Britain. Meeting at night, the group read the latest news from France and planned their own program of action in preparation for the day when the French Revolution should become a new and more glorious revolution for Britain.

Though the day of revolution never came, Tom Morrison did not lose his interest in reform when the forces of reaction appeared triumphant across Europe. In 1832, he wrote "On the Rights of Land," in which some sixteen years before Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, he dealt with the problem of class conflict and the surplus labor theory of value, but from an agrarian rather than an industrial point of view. The original manuscript, neatly written in Morrison's precise hand, may be found today among a miscellaneous collection of Carnegie papers at the Carnegie Museum in Dunfermline. The composition is surprisingly literate for a man who could have had very little formal schooling. More interesting than the flamboyantly provocative style of the composition, however, is the content of the argument. Morrison begins his essay by stating that "the rights, as they are called, of Land Lords are of four kinds; and I hope to shew that each and all of them are

wrong; the titles being founded in usurpation and maintained in injustice." The four claims to land rights which he summarily dismisses are (1) the right of squattage or first possession; (2) the right of conquest; (3) the right of inheritance, which he finds the most damnable of all; and (4) the right of purchase. On this last right, he writes:

Here is my neighbour Z who by honest industry and strict economy has acquired property in a part of the lands of the Common good and this under the sanction of law. May he not therefore hold his property? Would it not be unjust to deprive him of property in land as of property in labour? Answer: No; for land like light and air is the gift of the Creator to all; it is unpurchaseable [*sic*] and inalienable because man's happiness and life depends on it whereas every man's labour is his own, and generally speaking, he may do what he will with it. Thus it would be wrong to deprive Z of that part of the crop which may be considered due as a reward for the labour expended in production; say, two-thirds of the whole which generally falls to the farmer; but it would be right to take from him, for the use of the whole community that portion of the crop, say, one-third or its money value called rent which he claims as land Lord, because that is the inherent value of the properties of surface and fertility of the soil *per se* (as the learned say) which are the patrimony of all.

Anticipating by some fifty years Henry George's arguments, Morrison's solution to the land problem was the immediate nationalization of all land, with the income earned above the amount actually acquired by the exertion of labor to be returned to the state for the benefit of all. "Our motto is, each shall possess; and shall enjoy: Our principal [*sic*] universal and equal right; and our 'Law of the land' shall be Everyman a lord; every woman a lady; and every child an heir. Call you this robbery? It is justice strict and impartial." He criticizes Bentham for not going far enough in his statement of the greatest happiness to the greatest number, preferring instead the doctrine of the greatest happiness for all, but he saves his harshest indictment for the "accursed Malthusians."

Morrison concludes his essay with a bitter denunciation of wealth and privilege: "Behold the condition of those who have made the poor to be poor, and remember that wealth is only one element of happiness; that virtue is rarely its companion, that without virtue wealth ceases to be a cause of happiness, nay becomes a positive increment of misery." He quotes Burns on Poosie Nancy and her girls and then says that the Marchioness of Conyngham and the Countess of Jersey perform the same function in society, only without pay. Finally he condemns what he calls

The little aristocracies of Grocerdom! and Grazierness, of Manufacturedom and Merchantdom—the Knobocracy—the tyranny of the middle class and their unhappiness and fear—fear lest they may slip and will have to work. . . . As for the working men, the most numerous and most meritorious class, ask them if they have happiness in this Bentham world. They will answer Happiness! We scarcely know what it is. Our growth has been stunted in childhood; our corporeal frames are wasted in manhood; our minds are paralyzed and stultified from scanty, coarse food with constant wearisome incessant toil. We have no time to be good, no leisure to be wise. . . . Perhaps some little piecer walking more than twenty miles a day with motion continuous as that of the rollers which he feeds, inattentive to your question will ask you "When shall we have the ten-hours bill." And you will stave the child off with a monody over the miseries of the blacks, a lamentation for their slavery and an exhortation to thankfulness for its white skin and blessed freedom, and you will give it a preaching on piety and a dissertation on political economy and the principles of "free-trade"—of free trade in the bones, muscles and sinews of factory children. I will reply for the child, "Curse your hypocrisy [*sic*]; blast your economy."

What Andrew Carnegie's reaction to this stricture against wealth was when he read it some seventy years later is not expressed in his somewhat laconic inscription on the flyleaf: "My Grandfather Morrison's book and his essay. A great man for his day. Andrew Carnegie, N.Y. Dec. 2, 1903."

Although this essay is better than anything else that Morrison wrote and is a major contribution to the pre-

Marxian literature of social protest it never found a publisher. Most of his writings did, however, for he was a frequent contributor to William Cobbett's *Register*, and one essay, entitled "Heddakashun and Handication," an attack on the special privileges fostered by the exclusive public schools of Britain and a demand for free vocational training for the working classes, was, Cobbett later said, the finest article ever to appear in the *Register*.

In 1833, Morrison started a monthly newspaper called *The Precursor*, which would serve, he hoped, as the journal for the radicals of eastern Scotland. After the first issue, no printer in Dunfermline would handle it, so Morrison took his copy the twenty-five miles to Edinburgh, where he found a printer who would publish it. But even in that cosmopolitan environment, it survived for only two more issues. Its tone was too radical, its emphasis too economic to satisfy the younger generation of radicals in that part of Scotland. For increasingly, the earlier, essentially socialistic radicalism was losing out to the less radical demands for political democracy, as expressed in the Chartist movement of the 1830's. Old Tom Morrison's son, Tom junior, and his son-in-law, William Carnegie, were to be the leaders in Dunfermline of this new Chartism.

The movement for reform in Britain in the third decade of the nineteenth century, like the corresponding agitation in America in these same years, at first attracted a great variety of reformers, each with his own particular doctrine of salvation: the prohibition of alcoholic beverages, the end to capital punishment, complete political and social equality for women. But just as the reforming zeal in America was eventually to be largely concentrated in the one demand for the abolition of slavery, so in Britain it became centered in the six demands for political democracy which would serve as a new Magna Carta for Britain. As the weekly income of the handloom weavers dropped steadily from a high of 27 shillings a week in 1797 to 5 shillings, sixpence in 1830, and as all efforts to put through a bill

which would have established a minimum wage within the weaving industry were defeated in Parliament, the working class became convinced that only through political democracy could it achieve any amelioration of its depressed economic situation.

Chartism in Scotland took two forms, that of western Scotland—where the Irish immigrants were concentrated—which proposed direct physical force such as riots, sabotage, and open war with the militia to force from a frightened nation a program of reform; and that of eastern Scotland, which favored a policy of moral persuasion, including what it called a National Holiday from all work to achieve the desired reforms. Tom Morrison, Jr. and William Carnegie belonged to the moral persuasion group, which had its headquarters in Edinburgh under the able leadership of John Fraser, editor of the Chartist newspaper *The True Scotsman*.

In the first issue of that newspaper, in July 1838, appears a letter from Will Carnegie expressing satisfaction that the latest petition to be sent to Parliament from the Working Men's Association of Dunfermline will contain 6,106 signatures, over three times as many names as on any previous petition. "The work goes on gloriously here," he wrote. "The Association is very strong in number, still increasing, and every man is nobly doing his duty. Indeed, we flatter ourselves, were all the country as the Western District of Fife, the advocates of misrule and corruption would soon have to give place to a better order of things; but 'It's coming yet for a' that.' Yours, etc., W. Carnegie."

The Morrison and Carnegie families attacked in print and from the lectern special privilege wherever it existed in Britain: Parliament, the monarchy, the public schools, the army, and the established church. It was into this unorthodox radical family that Andrew Carnegie was born in 1835, and one of his earliest memories was of being wakened in the middle of the night by a crowd of men who had come to tell his parents that Tom Morrison, Jr.,

had been arrested for sedition after having delivered a lecture on Chartism.

The optimism that Andrew's father expressed in his letter to the Chartist editor in 1838 proved illusory, and in the years that followed, all efforts in eastern Scotland to achieve democracy through moral persuasion proved as ineffective as the more physical methods used around Glasgow and Paisley. Morrison and Will Carnegie called for the peaceful cessation from labor of the weavers, but it proved impossible to prevent violence from accompanying these strikes. The militia came in, and the sullen weavers went back to work for even less than they had received before. Will Carnegie, by the spring of 1848, with only one loom and no apprentices left, had to admit that he had no further orders for damask cloth at any price. It was then that Margaret Morrison Carnegie, who seems to have shared in none of the radical ideas of her father, brother, and husband, took over control of the family. The last loom was sold, twenty pounds were borrowed from a neighbor, and the Carnegies sailed for America in May 1848. Had they stayed in Scotland to the end of that momentous year, they would have seen not only the defeat of liberalism on the continent of Europe, but the dismally spluttering conclusion to all the hopes of the British Chartists. The effort to achieve political democracy in Britain had failed. In the years ahead the men who had been the associates of Will Carnegie and Tom Morrison would turn from political action to economic pressure, from the demand for seats in Parliament to the demand for recognition of trade unions.

It is important to note that the Carnegies, like the German liberals who came to America by the thousands in this same year, left a Europe that was pre-Marxian in its attitudes, left with their objectives still defined in terms of political rather than economic democracy. In an America of Jacksonian democracy, it seemed to them that they had found the realization of those objectives and they looked no further. One can say that this migration at this par-



Chartist procession in London, April 10, 1848. (*Bettmann Archive.*)

ticular moment caused in men like Andrew Carnegie and Carl Schurz a kind of arrested development. For a young boy who has been taught that all any man needs is the equality of opportunity in a world where there is no special privilege of birth, church, or ballot, the United States, at least the northern states in 1848, seemed the complete realization of all that his father and uncle had been seeking. Young Andrew was soon writing enthusiastic letters to his favorite cousin, George Lauder, back in Scotland:

In my last letter I promised to tell you how we were governed. . . . Our government is founded upon justice & our creed is that the will of the People is the *source* & their happiness the end of all legitimate Government. Such a government needs none of the wretched props necessary to the existence of despotism. . . . It is strange that with your immense Army and police system you cannot keep the Peace. . . . Here the new immigrants find no Royal Family (increasing with fearful

rapidity) to squander their hard made earnings—No aristocracy to support—No established church with its enormous sinecures . . . they find the various reforms which they struggled for at home in successful operation here. . . . We have all your good traits which are many with few or none of your bad ones which I must say are neither few nor far between. . . . We have the Charter which you have been fighting for for years as the Panacea for all Britain's woes, the bulwark of the liberties of the people.

In the years ahead, in spite of Civil War, Reconstruction, and the angry cries of Populism, Carnegie's vision of America as the heaven for all good Chartists remained quite unchanged. When a somewhat skeptical Scottish reporter from Aberdeen asked him during an interview in 1891, "But you mean to say in America you have no long standing abuses to correct as we in Britain have?" Carnegie replied, "No, that is true, and it is a blessing. The system is perfect. We have only the proper administration of perfect institutions to look after."

If America in 1848 had appeared to the young Scot as a realized Utopia for his father's Chartist dreams, the booming town of Pittsburgh where his family settled, presented the alluring opportunity for prosperity that might satisfy the materialistic ambitions of his mother. And prosper young Carnegie did! By 1868, at the age of thirty-three, he could confidently expect to have an annual income of fifty thousand dollars from his investments even if he should never work another day. But this very prosperity raised certain unpleasant thoughts in Carnegie's mind that suggested he was being unfaithful to his Chartist heritage. In that year he wrote to himself a brief promissory note stating that he would retire from business within two years, give to himself the formal education he had been denied, and then devote the rest of his life to "taking part in public matters, especially those connected with education and the improvement of the poorer classes." There is a note of desperation in the concluding paragraph of this remarkable, introspective statement:

Man must have an idol—the amassing of wealth is one of the worst species of idolatry—no idol more debasing than the worship of money. Whatever I engage in I must push inordinately; therefore should I be careful to choose that life which will be the most elevating in its character. To continue much longer overwhelmed by business cares and with most of my thoughts wholly upon the way to make more money in the shortest time, must degrade me beyond hope of permanent recovery. I will resign business at thirty-five. . . .

Having written this confession, Carnegie placed it in a desk drawer and largely ignored its directions. He did not retire from business, but rather continued to “push inordinately.” Within twenty years, his wealth had grown far beyond even the limits of his imagination in 1868. But the self-doubts could not be as easily forgotten as had been his promise to retire. In 1886, he wrote *Triumphant Democracy*, hoping to prove by 509 pages of census statistics and flag-waving that democracy can be equated with material progress. At the same time, he attempted to carry the old war of Chartism back to Britain. He purchased twelve newspapers in England, including the London *Echo*, in whose editorial columns he proposed to push republicanism. He campaigned throughout the British Isles on behalf of radical candidates for Parliament. Before the Radical Association of his native town, he presumed to define democracy for Britain: “Democracy does not mean equality of conditions, physical or mental, or equality as to property. It does mean political equality and the equality of opportunity.” He concluded by saying that he was more proud of his radical background than any duke could be of his.

Here was the Chartist come home again, to pick up the battle standard that his father had been forced to lay down, and with a wealth that his father could not have imagined to give substance to his army. But in spite of the cheering crowds and the money and the publicity, the campaign failed. The newspapers lost money—the only investment Carnegie ever made that did—and within two years he

had sold all of them. He had not toppled the throne or destroyed the House of Lords or disestablished the church.

The old doubts persisted. With his ever increasing wealth, had he "degraded himself beyond the hope of recovery"? More alarming, in this process of accumulation had he helped to change America in such a manner as to degrade democracy as well? These, it seems to this writer, were the questions of conscience, a conscience born in Chartist Dunfermline, that Carnegie had to answer. They are not the questions of conscience that the writers of the "robber baron" school would demand that he ask. Carnegie was not troubled by his men working twelve long hours in the inferno of his steel plants. The tough ones would take it, the smart ones would advance out of it. For democracy to Carnegie, as he told the Dunfermline Radicals, meant only the equality of opportunity, not the equality of condition.

But what was happening to an America in which one man could accumulate a third of a billion dollars? Carnegie had tried rather desperately to show in his 1886 campaign in Britain that American democracy was the best expression of Chartism, but it was difficult to reconcile plutocracy with democracy. He had once written that of all the lines in Robert Burns's poems that he loved, the one that meant the most to him was "Thine own reproach alone do fear." For anyone as confident in his own abilities as Carnegie, it was the only reproach he could fear. But fear this he did, and somehow he had to justify his life to himself. Unlike some of his contemporaries such as Fisk, Gould, and Drew, he could not accept for himself the innocent animal amorality of the freebooter, nor on the other hand could he, having never accepted the tenets of orthodox religion, now retreat with John D. Rockefeller into pious Baptism and say, "The Good Lord gave me my wealth."

Carnegie finally found justification for plutocracy by his Gospel of Wealth: A man may accumulate great wealth in a democracy, but he has a responsibility to return that

wealth in a way that will not destroy society's own responsibility to preserve individual initiative. To give through the usual charitable outlets is wrong, for such charity keeps the weak weak and upsets the equality of opportunity. To give library buildings with the provision that the community must then furnish the books is right, for this makes available opportunities for all and at the same time respects the responsibility of the community. And who is better prepared for such a responsibility of being steward for a nation's accumulated wealth than the man who, starting with nothing, has through his own initiative gathered in this wealth? Carnegie had at last made peace with his conscience.



Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919). (*Bettmann Archive.*)

Interview: Edward C. Kirkland

Edward C. Kirkland is a professional historian and, as with most professionals, the lack of a popular reputation has obscured the fact that colleagues regard him as one of the country's outstanding scholars and teachers of American economic history.

"Teaching and scholarship are not a rare combination," Mr. Kirkland said one morning not long ago, without false modesty but clearly as a man who had some firm views about his profession. He sat as he spoke in the study of his home in Thetford, Vermont, where he has recently retired after twenty-five years at Bowdoin College. (Thetford, which in size and style lingers in the nineteenth century, has the double merit, for Mr. Kirkland, of being in New England and also within easy driving distance of the Dartmouth library in nearby Hanover.) Mr. Kirkland's mornings usually go to research and writing, but a few days earlier he had shipped off the manuscript of his latest book—his seventh, nearly all of them dealing with the economic history of the United States—to his publisher.

Now, with a pot of his wife's coffee in easy reach, he was in the mood for a morning of talk.

"Certainly the best teachers I had in graduate school at Harvard combined the two," he went on. "Seems to me scholarship and teaching are *never* incompatible. I believe that nothing is more essential than research for a teacher, especially one whose only ties are with undergraduates. I've seen too often what happens when a man concentrates only on his teaching. After a year or two he becomes sympathetic with the undergraduate point of view, and within a few more years he *is* an undergraduate. His mind, except that it's stocked with more facts, is not beyond the best of them. When you become a scholar, you enter the arena where you are not judged by juveniles but by your peer group, to use a nasty sociological phrase.

"Now, understand me. Research is of no direct use to a teacher. In fact, misused it can hurt a man's teaching. There is nothing more deadly than for a research man to come into an undergraduate class and give the results of his work. This is trifling. This happened to me when I was a student at Dartmouth. The qualities of mind that research develops are what count. This is the essential."

Mr. Kirkland reached for his coffee, which had been cooling as he talked, and after reflecting a moment he said: "I don't think history can be directly useful either. I think it can be indirectly useful—the way research is to the scholar who is teaching. That is, it gives a certain depth and perspective to a man. These are the qualities which are useful in life to those who direct the fortunes of men.

"Now, the events of history are discreet. We say quite justly history doesn't repeat itself. If that's true, then history is useless for direct application. It is useful contingently, remotely. I once heard Charles Beard deride history on the ground that it didn't prepare you to predict the result of the mayoralty election in Chicago in 1923." Mr. Kirkland paused briefly, as if to savor the recollection.

"What a shallow criticism! Of course not! History cannot

give certainties—I'm not certain it can even give probabilities—but most of all it can give possibilities when you are extrapolating about the future. History points out the varieties of choices. I suppose that's what we mean by breadth. Wisdom, depth, urbanity, impartiality, detachment—these are the contributions historians and students of history can make.

"Yes, I said 'detachment,' despite what the relativists say about our times and individual prejudices shaping our judgments. Relativism is poppycock. We all know the age determines what interests us, and also to some degree that it determines our findings. But the whole point of historical learning is to free ourselves and to mount into an atmosphere where prejudices are not discounted but discarded."

It was obvious as Mr. Kirkland talked that New England has left its stamp on him. His accent marks the fact that he was born, reared, and educated there. His affection for his native soil cuts so deeply that an acquaintance once remarked that, like the author of "America the Beautiful," who describes America as a land of "rocks and rills," he tends at times to see the nation as a New England grown large. (He once told friends at the University of Wisconsin that he especially enjoyed his trips to Madison, where the university is located, because it resembled so much a New England town.) And like another eminent New Englander, Robert Frost, to whom he bears a resemblance, he belies the cliché about taciturn Yankees.

"I don't know the source of my ideas about history," Mr. Kirkland continued, "but I do know the people I learned most from were Harold Laski, F. W. Taussig, and Edward Channing. All were superlative teachers. Channing was a wonderful man to do a doctorate under. He knew perfectly what the relationship of master to apprentice should be. He let you go your own way, make your own mistakes. He believed a dissertation should be completely written before showing a chapter. Channing's old students—Howard Beale, Kathleen Bruce, Frederick Merk, E. E. Dale,

Samuel Morison—have either retired or died. I often wake up at night and feel that Channing is an eagle forgotten. The times have passed him by, I'm afraid. Channing believed historical writing should have eloquence and emotion. He used to read me parts of the volume of his *History of the United States* he was writing at the time I was working on my doctorate—volume five, I think—and when he reached some Olympian passage he would nearly choke as he read. And I would, too. He worked especially hard on the passage dealing with John Brown's raid. It is a great passage as it stands, but I think an earlier draft I read to me was much better. Why, it just swept you on your feet.

"Laski was something else. He was probably the most brilliant lecturer I ever listened to. Never a note, never a pause to grope for the right word. His lectures came off as though ready for print and probably were. As a speaker on a platform prima donna, I think he was unsurpassed. I never forget the time he began a lecture with a long quotation from *Canterbury Tales*. God knows how he tied it to politics, but he lay back and gave it to us and had the class hushed in complete awe.

"Taussig's great talent was as a leader of discussion groups. Through sheer accident—my academic life is built on a series of accidents—I took his course in economic theory—Ec 11. He could run a class through a Socratic dialogue with superb skill, encourage the slow ones and throw off the bright ones so that they weren't so certain about their conclusions as they had been at the start. In this sense, I modeled myself as a teacher on Taussig. Took me a while. I was going to say about thirty years, though it wasn't quite that long—quite a while to learn how to manage a discussion group. I finally realized that it requires the ability or painstakingness to see the problem covered in the reading in terms of questions that force the student to use the material in a new way. Pose a problem and you've got a discussion. If you don't do that, you've got nothing.

out a recitation. Essential, too, is a knowledge of the personalities and talents of your students. You want to know the student who can give you the right answer and the one who can give you the wrong answer. Get the right answer at first and . . . you are killed! You want the man who'll raise the wrong hares, who'll get caught in the brambles, to come through first.

"Lecturing is something else again—requires an entirely different technique. Charles Homer Haskins had a bit of advice I've never forgotten. Always mention a date in the first three words. Pretty hard to that take that literally, but I shoot for a date in the first sentence. Mention one and the students immediately take it down and from then on are listening to you. A quotation for some reason I could never figure out works just as well. I used to lecture on manifest destiny. I'd always start with a series of generalizations and when I gave exams found students had never got when I'd been saying. A teacher's generalizations are to students like a pitcher's warm-up throws. Give them a date, a quotation—that's the first pitched ball to them. A very amusing dodge."

The conversation drifted in other channels for a while. A remark about the role chance plays in shaping events led to an explanation of how Mr. Kirkland happened to become an economic historian. "You know," he said with a smile, "accident plays an enormous role in scholarly life. Judging from my own experience, I don't think you should put much time into planning your own life. That will take care of itself. When I went to Brown, where I began my teaching, it was to teach the elementary course in American history. In the advanced field, I could take for my own either economic or Latin American history. I took economic, largely on the ground that I had never had a course in Latin American history and didn't know Spanish, but I had been exposed to economics through Taussig and also E. F. Gay, who was the leader of the economic history profession at the time. So there the twig was bent, through no effort of mine.

“Actually, I don’t think I’m in the mainstream—or mainstreams, if you wish—of work being done in economic history. The quantifiers give me little time. I don’t have tables, charts, or graphs. It is a language, frankly, I don’t understand. After all, I’m engaged in communication, and graphs, for me at least, aren’t much use in communicating. You’ve got to verbalize if you’re going to communicate. I’m not acquainted with this new language. The other stream—the economic theory-and-structure boys—believe economic history is designed to illustrate the theories they have elaborated, the models they have found a priori. To me economic history should come first and the theory emerge from it. Another objection I have to this school is that it’s *ex post facto*. Seems absurd to me to treat the nineteenth century, for instance, in terms of 1961. What’s important to know is what theories *they* operated on. I believe in saturating yourself in contemporary thought, without any preconceptions about what you’re going to find out. This, incidentally, is a very long time coming. You have to read the material once, then when your path begins to emerge you have to go back and read everything once again, for you see lots of things that slipped past your eye the first time. If you approach with a preconceived pattern, you undoubtedly find what you’re looking for. Everyone does.

“You can see my research methods are not the most efficient. I have set working habits. I’ve learned to go to work at eight in the morning—that’s when the Dartmouth library opens—whether I feel inspired or not. Good working habits—this is moralistic, of course—are the best preparation in the world, but heaven knows how one acquires them or when. Well, my habits are satisfactory, but my methods are quite unsystematic and sloppy. My desk becomes a rat’s nest of open books, torn bits of papers, and the like when a book’s in the gestation period. I take almost no notes, unless I know later access to the material will be difficult. I start by drawing up a provisional outline, then as I read I put down a page reference of material that

interests me, then—in accordance with Channing again—I put all the stuff away and write it out. Never have a book in front of you when writing, Channing used to say. The first draft comes easily. I think that's because of accumulated experience rather than any natural literary talent.

“Channing also always said to put aside your first draft for four years. Of course that is impossible, but if you're writing a book it is damn near four years from beginning to end. My gifted wife—one of the few people in the world who can read my handwriting—copies my longhand first draft on the typewriter in triple space. I take this copy and rewrite it. One of the curious results of this mechanism is that the triple-spacing makes the writing seem more loose than it really is. So you tend to tighten up, shrug up, just because you're offended at the rambling document you seem to have before you. It takes almost a year to rewrite the first draft. The second version is my last, till the editors have crawled all over it.”

That seemed to end Mr. Kirkland's remarks on his methods of writing history, and a glance at his watch implied that the hour verged too close to lunch for much more talk. A question on writing style, however, prodded him on. “This is a thing I've often speculated on—whence you derive your style. I suppose it develops from exposure. I remember when I was grinding out my lectures. I wrote them out—this is what Channing taught me, not because he did it, but because he didn't. When I was working in the Jeffersonian period, I read Henry Adams's work and you know without copying I found I'd imitated his style. Would to God he had made a permanent impression. A more enduring influence—and this is nothing but a hunch—is the fact that I had Latin. I had four years of it in high school and one in college. I'm inclined to favor the Latin prose style—particularly in the matter of sentence structure. I prefer periodic sentences. Latin doesn't teach you to write short, simple declarative sentences, the way journalists do or the way students are being taught today.

"Perhaps, too, the Bible influenced me. One way or another I was steeped in the Bible till I went to college. My father was a very—what's the word I want . . . devoted?—Bible student. I suspect his religious beliefs were thin or nonexistent, but if the town wanted, say, a verse for a stained-glass window, my father could provide it in an instant. And of course I was put through a long siege of Sunday school. Whether all this shaped my style or not—certainly it helped me as an historian. I just don't think you can understand the United States until you realize how much influence the King James version of the Bible exerted on the nation."

Nowhere in the morning's conversation had Mr. Kirkland alluded to the fact that among the academic honors that have come his way were the presidency of the American Association of University Professors and of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association. Had the work connected with these posts in any way influenced him as an historian? The answer came quickly. "No doubt about it at all. My experience as an academic bureaucrat—and that's the phrase for it—has been a profound influence on my intellectual outlook. My work on the AAUP's committee on academic freedom made me a passionate devotee of freedom—not only in the academic world, but also for other people. I suddenly saw that freedoms in the academic world were ones that apply to all man's activities. I could never have started *Dream and Thought in the Business Community* but for my AAUP experience. (That, by the way, is the favorite of my books, the one I reread with the most pleasure; there's a little air of gaiety in it; I feel happy when I read it.)

"I dislike intellectual extremes. I am by nature a compromiser. This is a result, in part at least, of my bureaucratic experience, where I saw the unending difficulty of getting anything done. This has led me to a much more appreciative understanding of people who *do* get things done whether they be in politics or business. One realizes that

this ability is a genuine talent. The danger of this kind of experience is that you are led into just an admiration of success. Perhaps, though, it's less harmful to admire success than failure.

"I started out in college with a natural predilection to progressivism or what I supposed was radicalism. I thought I was a good deal more radical than Theodore Roosevelt or Woodrow Wilson, both of whom I admired. But my administrative experience has contributed a block to my thought of a different hue and shape than the block I started with. That's why I say I'm a compromiser."

DAVID HAWKE



Edward C. Kirkland. (*Stephen Morse.*)

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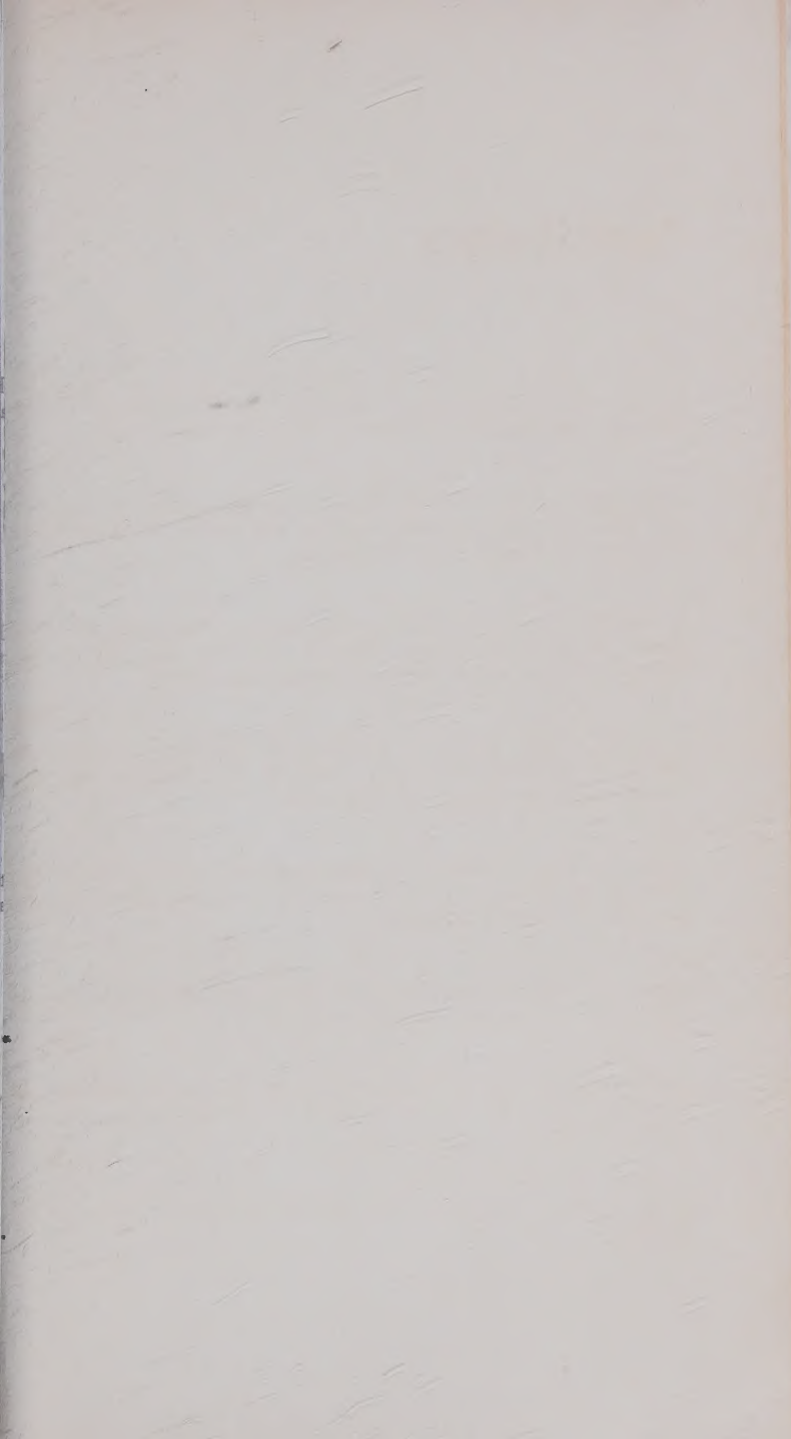
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DAVID HAWKE'S interview with Richard Hofstadter appeared in HISTORY 3.



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